



**First Congregational Church**  
*28 N. Chenango Street, Greene, NY 13778*  
**Rev. Curtis Whitman, Pastor**  
**Sunday Worship Service begins at 9:55 a.m.**  
*Church Phone: (607) 656-4923*  
*Pastor's Study (607) 656-7449*  
**Website Address – [www.uccgreene.org](http://www.uccgreene.org)**  
**E-mail address – [uccgreene@juno.com](mailto:uccgreene@juno.com)**

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*“The mission of First Congregational Church is to worship God, to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to celebrate the Sacraments; to realize Christian fellowship and unity within this church and the Church Universal; to render loving service toward all people; to strive for righteousness, justice and peace.*”

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**First Sunday after Christmas**  
**December 31, 2017**

## **THE CHURCH GATHERS**

### **GATHERING TIME**

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **PRELUDE**

*The prelude gives us an opportunity to prepare our heart and minds for worship.*

## WE WORSHIP GOD

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: When Jesus is born to Mary and Joseph,

**People: God is there.**

Leader: When Jesus is presented at the temple,

**People: God is there.**

Leader: When Simeon holds Jesus in his arms,

**People: God is there.**

Leader: When Anna recognizes Jesus in the temple,

**People: God is there.**

Leader: This very morning,

**People: God is here.**

Leader: In the future we cannot see,

**People: God is there.**

**All: Let us worship God!**

**\*HYMN "O Come, All Ye Faithful"**

**#182**

**\*OPENING PRAYER (unison)**

**Holy God, you visited this planet of ours in the nature of Jesus of Nazareth. We ask you to renew within us the sense of your presence with us. We give thanks for your works of love and your merciful provision for all our needs. In covenant with you and all your people, we join in worship and service. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

**PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST'S BLESSING**

**One: "The peace of Christ be with you."**

**Another: "And also with you."**

**GLORIA PATRI (a second Century Hymn of praise)**

**#734**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end. Amen.**

**ANTHEM "Away In a Manger"**

**- Howard Helvey**

**HEARING THE HOLY SCRIPTURES**

**Isaiah 61:10-62:3 p.648 (LP-1158)**

**Galatians 4:4-7 p.1018 (LP-1813)**

**Luke 2:22-40 p.894 (LP-1591)**

**MESSAGE "Beyond the Gift"**

**\*HYMN "What Child Is This"**

**#184**

*"In our thoughts and prayers" slips will be collected by the ushers during the hymn*

**RESPONDING IN FAITH**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Before our time of prayer, you are invited to share any joys or concerns you may have in your heart that others may respond to those requests today and throughout the week. Every Thursday morning at 10:00 a.m. a prayer team prays over these prayers and the concerns included in our program. You are welcome to join us in prayer any Thursday.

**LORD'S PRAYER (UNISON)**

**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  
have forgiven 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.**

# RECEIVING OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

## OFFERTORY

### **\*DOXOLOGY**

#34

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

### **\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION OF GIFTS AND SELF (unison)**

**God of Vision, take these offerings of money and turn them into vision; vision of all people fed, vision of all people safe, vision of all people housed, vision of all people educated. Amen.**

### **\*HYMN "Joy to the World"**

#179

## GOING OUT TO SERVE GOD'S WORLD

### BENEDICTION

Leader: May the God who comes through the child Jesus  
bless the child in each of you  
and receive the blessings that we return.

People: Amen.

### POSTLUDE *(please be seated)*

**\*Those who are able are asked to stand**

#### *Thought for the Day*

*While continuing in the Christmas season, the world celebrates this day as the start to a new year. Israel was looking for a new start in the Lord. Is there a new start today for you?*

**Past Meets Future: A Blessing for Today** was written by an intergenerational family team: the Rev. Dr. Robert George, retired minister ordained in the Presbyterian Church of the USA and Karen George, retired Christian educator, both now active in the Broad Bay Congregational UCC of Waldoboro, Maine, and Judy Colby-George, carrying on the family tradition as Christian educator at First Parish Church of Freeport, Maine.



ALSO TAKING PART IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Ushers	- Bob & Nancy Root
Choir Director	- Ken Jones
Organist	- Zach Crandall
Scripture Reader	- Michael Rowbottom
Coffee Hour	- 5th Sunday Potluck

*Hand sanitizer has been placed at both entrances to the Sanctuary.*

*Large print Bibles are found on the tables in the Narthex/Vestibule. Pick one up to use during service or ask an usher for assistance. (Please return them to the tables in the Narthex after the service.)*

*Reminder: Please wear your nametag which can be found in the social hall.*

**A note to our guests:**

**Whoever you are, and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcomed here at First Congregational Church!** We're happy to have you worship with us today. May the love of God touch your life through this time of worship.

If you have questions about the Christian faith, about the United Church of Christ, or about our congregation, please feel free to approach one of the deacons (you can spot them by the word DEACON on their name tags), or the pastor. If you do not have a Bible and would like one, we will be happy to provide one for you... just ask! Of course, the best way to learn about our faith is to worship with us and become involved in our fellowship. We are all in a lifelong journey of discovery, and we invite you to come along!

**Hearing enhancement headphones** are available. Just ask an usher. CD's of the service are available. Just ask an usher. If you are a guest and have any questions about our church, please contact Rev. Curtis Whitman, Pastor at 656-7449 or a Deacon: Sharon Barton (656-7651), Sharon Fowler (656-9647), George Estey (656-4564), Jim Gagnon (656-4719), Joan Paino (656-9633), Donna Possemato (656-7964), Theresa Schultheis (242-9696) or Russ Haberl (656-9092).

# **THE JOYS AND CONCERNS OF THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, UCC**

*Sunday, December 31, 2017*

**Please remember in prayer:** Our world, our country, our state, our town, our church and church family, the people of Florida, Texas & Puerto Rico, Pastor Curtis and family, Donna Babiy, Zoya Babiy, Frank Baginski, Tom Baniak, Shirley Barton, Becky, Diane Bauer, Braelyn Blakeslee, Charlie Brancato, George Clark, Art & Carol DeJager, Kay Doak, John Estey, Nancy Haberl, Don Jackson, Florence Ludlam, Charlie McMullen, Caroline McRoberts, Kevin Moorhead, Dale Reynolds, Susan Schultheis, Jack Shay, Don Simmonds, Nancy Sloan, Pamela Summers, Wesley Tallett, Marion Titus, Lee Yeager, The refugees around the world, The Financial Status of the Church. We pray for our members and friends who are undergoing cancer treatment or hospice: Donna Kimball Aron, John & Phyllis Auwarter, John Bennett, Barb Brancato, Tammy Burgess, George Estey, Patricia Field, Richard Haberl, Russ Haberl, John Harvey, Drew Harrington, Roger Jeffrey, Joy Ketcham, Kathy Daniels Knudson, Wade Leonard, Beverly Manchester, Betsy Murray, Jack & Trena Najarian, Ed Sloan, Joan & Reyn Smith, Dan Tallett, Becky Tilbe, Darlene Tury, Carol Utter, Karen Vanvoorhis, Lynn Walz, Rev. Dr. Marsha Williams, Brenda Utter. We pray for those in the military: Harley Ann Beat, Ethan Estey, Tammy Gagnon, Jeff Ketcham, Robert B. Rauff, Matthew Reynolds, Rob & Sara Root, Autumn Meister Vernon and all who serve. *If you are in need of special prayers, please contact Sharon Fowler at 656-9647.*

## **CHURCH CALENDAR**

- December 31 - Worship 9:55 AM
  - Food Pantry Collection/5th Sunday Potluck
- January 1 - New Year's Day
- 2 - **Annual Report Deadline**
  - Zumba 6 PM
- 3 - WIC 8:30-4:30
  - Choir 7 PM
- 4 - Prayer Team 10 AM
- 5 - Exercise Class 9 AM
- 7 - Worship with Sunday school and Communion 9:55 AM
  - Families in Need Collection

*The February 2018 newsletter deadline is **Monday, January 15th**. Please e-mail your article to Linda at [uccgreene@juno.com](mailto:uccgreene@juno.com). Copies of the January 2018 newsletter are on the table in the hallway by the social hall doors. **The Annual Report deadline is Tuesday, January 2nd.***

*The attendance for Sunday, December 24th was 78 adults and 3 children.*

## **USHERS**

*January: Stephen & Cherie Bentley*

*February: Jim & Cindy Gagnon*

*March: George & Peg Marr*

*April: Michael & Jeannie Orzell*

Each head usher needs to enlist another two people to serve with them each month. Please contact the church office with the names so they can be listed in the bulletin each week.

## **Missions**

Your Missions committee helps women and children (WIC) in need monthly, by providing a bag of items not included in the program. We would like to remind everyone we greatly appreciate donations to help keep this program alive. You may drop off your donations the first Sunday of the month or anytime in the box at the front of the church. We need single wrapped rolls of toilet tissue, dish detergent, shampoo, bars of soap, toothpaste, and purse size tissues. A big thank you from the Missions committee!



**We are collecting non-perishable items for the food pantry today. Boxes are provided in the Narthex and the Social Hall. Please support this project and help those less fortunate.**

**ANNUAL REPORT DEADLINE**

**For the January 2018 report is Tuesday, January 2nd.**

The beginning of January all reports are due for the church annual report. Please send your reports in as early as possible. All written reports shall be submitted to the church office by January 2nd. Please e-mail your report to [uccgreene@juno.com](mailto:uccgreene@juno.com). Thanks!

*The Annual Meeting will be held Sunday, January 21st after worship.*

**Sunday Collection Counters**

December 31: Sharon Barton & Susan Schultheis

*If you are unable to count for the week you are scheduled, please find someone to take your place and notify the church office with the new name.*

**Scripture Readers**

January 7: Kay Doak

January 14: Donna Possemato

January 21: Loretta Meister

January 28: Zach Crandall

**There is a scripture reader sign-up sheet on the round table in the social hall for January-April.**

*Please sign up, thanks!*

**Coffee Hour**

If your name is listed first, please call the others to coordinate for the day you are scheduled. If you can't attend please contact the others on your team. If you have any questions please feel free to contact Donna Possemato, coffee hour coordinator at 656-7964, [possjajd@frontiernet.net](mailto:possjajd@frontiernet.net). *Thanks for all your help!*

*Dec. 31: 5th Sunday Potluck*

*Jan 7: Rowbottom's, Ruth Bennett*

*Jan 14: Pollard, Mead, Meister*

*Jan 21: Annual Meeting, Youth (coffee Deacons)*

*Jan 28: Orzell's, Paula Basa*

If there is a 5th Sunday in a month, the church will have a pot luck luncheon after worship.

Upcoming Thankful Sundays will be

April 29th, July 29th, September 30th, December 30th, 2018