

The First Congregational Church of Warwick
715 Oakland Beach Ave.
Warwick, RI 02889
401-738-3377



Sunday Morning Worship and Sunday School **10:15 a.m.**
FCCWPastor@outlook.com or Look for us on Facebook!
First Congregational Church of Warwick
United Church of Christ
715 Oakland Beach Ave. Warwick, RI 02889

All Are Welcome
~First Sunday of Advent~

December 31, 2023

10:15 a.m.

Ministers: Pastor Michael Ashe
All People of the Church

Organist: Johnathon Miller
Handbell Director: Stefani Capuano

(* If you are able, please stand)

Invocation:

Announcements:

Words of Welcome:

Prelude: *Let us take a moment to think, to meditate and quietly prepare ourselves for worship.*

(*) Opening Hymn: #182 “*O Come All Ye Faithful*”

Call to Worship:

Pastor: Praise God in the heavens! Praise God among us! Praise the Holy One!

All: Praise God who vindicates us! Praise God who sustains us!

Pastor: Praise God from the depths! Praise God in all circumstances!

All: Praise Creator who made us! Praise God who shapes us!

Pastor: Let all praise the name of the Holy One!

All: The glory of God reigns in heaven and on earth! Praise the Holy One!

Prayer of Confession and Assurance:*(Unison) Sovereign God, you have been our help from age to age. Remind us to turn to you when confronted with difficult choices. Remind us that you strengthen us on the journey. Remind us that our actions and attitudes impact our neighbors and ourselves. Renew our minds and spirits as we strive to follow your way of love and peace in the world. Amen.*

Receiving Prayers of Joy:

Music of Celebration:

Responsive Reading: Psalm 148

Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!

Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!

Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars!

Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created.

He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps,
fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!

Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!

Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!

Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!

Young men and women alike, old and young together!

Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven.

He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful, for the people of Israel who are close to him. Praise the LORD!

Receiving Prayers of Concern:

Pastoral Prayer:

The Lord's Prayer:

(*) **The Gloria Patri: #734 “Glory Be to the Father”**

Offering the sign of Peace:

Scripture: Luke 2:22-40

Sermon: *“Long Awaited Gift”*

Morning Offering:

(*) **The Hymn of Dedication:** #147 *“Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow”*

(*) **The Closing Hymn:** # 189 *“Angels from the Realm of Glory”*

The Benediction:

(*) **Congregational Benediction Response:** (tune: Amazing Grace)
*Through Christ you are a child of God
Who dearly loves us all.
Go forth in peace to share God’s love;
Rise up to heed Christ’s call.*

Postlude:

We invite each of our church family offer this prayer each day.

“Lord, I offer my life to you. I ask that you create in my life and in the life of our church, a miracle. Amen.”

~ WE WELCOME YOU TO WORSHIP TODAY ~

We invite you to use our **Welcome Cards** found in the pews. Place them in the offering plate or hand them to the Pastor as you leave. You are invited to join us downstairs for coffee and fellowship following the service. There are facilities downstairs for parents of small children.

We invite you to place the names of those for whom you would like prayers on the **white prayer card** found in the card holders. They will be received at the opening of the Pastoral Prayer and the pastor will read the names.

Now that covid restrictions are being loosened, you no longer need to wear a mask during service if you are vaccinated. If you wish to wear one, that is fine. It is your personal preference.

Please keep our loved ones in your thoughts and prayers: Elaine, Joeann, Joan, Matt, Amy, Jodi, Nidia, Brian, The Sundin Family, Nancy, Sarah, Peter, Craig, Michael, Jean, Sandy, Stefani, My Loving church family, My Health, Brian, Sandy, Michael, Craig, Stefani's Family, Brian, Michael, Stefani, Kelsey, Aunt Ruth, Uncle Melvin, George, Harry, Julie, Maureen, Peter and his Dad, Our Church, Our State, Our Military, Our Nation, Brian, Robin, Bobby, Bev, Norm.

Sewing Circle meets on Wednesdays at 6 p.m.

Bible study meets on Thursdays at 6 p.m.

Handbell choir meets on Thursdays at 7 p.m.

All are Welcome!

Trustees Meeting- January 9, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.

Luke 2:22-40

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed--and a sword will pierce your own soul too." There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phaniel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.