

# The First Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

Bloomfield, CT

*An open and affirming congregation*

*Sunday, November 27, 2016*

## HOPE



FIRST SUNDAY

OF

Advent

### OUR MISSION

Responding to God's Call, our mission as The First Congregational Church in Bloomfield, United Church of Christ, is to go out into the world proclaiming God's love for all creation, working for justice, bringing Christ's peace and growing in love and faith through service to others. We are a safe and sacred community that welcomes all people and supports each individual journey of faith.



# The First Congregational Church in Bloomfield, UCC

10 Wintonbury Avenue, Bloomfield, CT 06002

Gathered as Wintonbury Parish February 14, 1738

Renewing our faith as people of God

8:00 & 10:00 a.m. Sunday, November 27, 2016

## FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

### WE GATHER TOGETHER

#### PRELUDE

*O Savior of the Heathen, Come*

J.S. Bach

**WELCOME** *please fill out the Ritual of Friendship pads*

#### LIFE OF OUR CHURCH

#### WELCOME GUESTS

#### PASSING OF THE PEACE

**CENTERING MOMENT** *“You are invited to be at Peace and One with GOD’s Spirit. Let us prepare ourselves to worship our God. In silence ...be at peace!”*



### WE WORSHIP GOD

(+ indicates that those who are able may stand)

#### INTROIT

Improvisation on *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor      Come, let us go to the mountain of the Lord.  
              Come let us worship in community.  
              Let us be open to God’s inspiration.  
              Come in a spirit of celebration.  
              A new Advent Season ...a time for renewal...  
              A new season full of expectations.  
              Let us worship our creator as one.

**All**            We will worship our God who delivers help to those in need,  
                  who has pity on the weak and the poor; who inspires and renews.  
                  Who is strength for victims of oppression, violence and injustice.  
                  We join to worship a liberating God who uses us as instruments of  
                  love and justice. Let us worship the living God together: God in us, God  
                  with us and beyond us! Let us be one in worship!

#### +HYMN OF AFFIRMATION

*Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*

# 121

## PRAYER OF INVOCATION & CONFESSION (UNISON)

Loving God...we welcome your creative spirit among us, even when you are beyond our understanding. We have been blessed by your revelation through Jesus the Christ and by other great teachers... We are grateful! We pray for new vision and strength. Help us to discern your ways of love, compassion and justice!

As one community we join in one prayer...

*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 trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever, Amen.*

## ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING: THE CANDLE OF HOPE

Pastor: Scripture describes Jesus as the light of the world. As followers of Jesus we are also invited and challenged to be a blessing, and to also be the light that illuminates others. Christmas is the season of lights, let us affirm Jesus as the light of the world!

**All: Today we begin a journey toward the Child Jesus who we affirm as the light of the world. Today we also commit ourselves to bring light to God's world.**

Pastor: Our journey begins with HOPE, our first light declares hope for the world.

**All: Today we begin a journey toward the Child Jesus who we affirm as the light of the world. Today we also commit ourselves to bring light to God's world by proclaiming HOPE.**

Pastor: May we kindle God's light together by witnessing a message of HOPE as we also become lights of blessings in God's world.

**All: Restore and renew us O GOD; may our faces shine with your light while proclaiming a message of HOPE!**

## CANDLE OF HOPE IS LIT AS WE SING THE ADVENT SONG

Candle lighters today are Kurt & Pat Robair

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL

# 114

SHARING THE GOOD NEWS WITH OUR CHILDREN

Dorine Decarli

**GOD IS STILL SPEAKING!**

**MAY GOD'S SPIRIT FILL OUR HEARTS WITH LOVE**

**MAY WE DISCOVER GOD'S REVELATIONS IN ALL EXPRESSIONS OF LIFE**

**LISTEN TO THE WORD OF GOD...GOD IS STILL SPEAKING!"**

FIRST LESSON Isaiah 2: 1-6

OT p.773 in black Bible, p.631 in red

SECOND LESSON Matthew 24: 36-47

NT p.33 in black Bible, p.27 in red

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE      **Thy Word is a Lamp Unto My Feet**      # 297

*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path*

PASTOR'S REFLECTION      **"A SEASON OF EXPECTATION FOR ALL"**      Pastor Ayala

+HYMN      *Now Bless the God of Israel*      # 122

**WE RESPOND TO GOD'S LOVE**

OFFERTORY PRAYER      "Blessed by Grace...Our financial support builds community"

OFFERTORY      *O Thou of God the Father*      J. S. Bach

PRESENTATION OF OFFERING

DOXOLOGY      # 44

*Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above ye heavenly hosts; Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

PRAYER AND DEDICATION OF OFFERINGS (UNISON)

God of grace and new possibilities,  
promoter of love and justice for all.  
Welcoming God, God of inclusivity...  
Our offerings are expressions of gratitude.  
May they be a blessing to the ministries of this congregation.  
May these offerings and pledges bless many lives  
with a message of love, peace, hope and justice,  
In the name of Jesus the Christ we pray...AMEN!

SHARING EXPRESSIONS OF JOY AS WELL AS CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE      **Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying**

*Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Lord, send your spirit in this place;  
Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.*



## WE GO FORTH TO SERVE

+ HYMN OF COMMITMENT TO SERVE *Lift Up Your Heads, You Mighty Gates* # 127

+BENEDICTION (Receive the blessing while holding hands) Pastor Ayala

“People of GOD...PEACE...SALAAM...ArDievu...Vayan con Dios...SHALOM”

“Go with God’s Blessing!”

GO AND ENJOY LIFE WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

GO...BE A GOOD NEWS CHRISTIAN  
PROMOTE UNITY, LOVE AND JUSTICE!

GO...SHARE YOUR MUSIC...SHARE YOUR JOY

GO...BE A RAINBOW IN SOMEONE’S CLOUD!

GO... WITH THE BLESSING OF...

GOD THE ALMIGHTY CREATOR,  
JESUS THE INSPIRING ONE, OUR SAVIOR  
AND WITH THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

GO... LIVE FULLY AND LET GOD SURPRISE YOU!

CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE *Amen, Amen, Amen*

POSTLUDE Improvisation on *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

### THOSE IN OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS (AMONG MANY):

- \* Prayers for Julie Cato who will be the recipient of a kidney transplant soon.
- \* Please keep Jack & Anne Carroll (former members of FCCB) in prayer on the loss of their granddaughter.
- \* Prayers for the Ciba Family on the recent loss of daughter Rachel Markowitz.
- \* Prayers for Bonnie King’s healing from recent cancer reoccurrence.
- \* Keep Calvin and Estelle Cole in your thoughts and prayers. Calvin is at Bloomfield Center for Nursing and Rehab, Estelle is at home, cards and calls would be appreciated.
- \* Michael Edwards, praying for release.
- \* Prayers that God will speak to us and through us as we seek God's leading and vision for our Church.
- \* Family & Friends of All Soldiers Who Have Fallen In Iraq & Afghanistan.
- \* Our friends at Community Solutions, Inc., that God will support them as they find new opportunities and hope for the future.



Doris Ahrens	David Berg	Sue Davis	Gladys Dunbar	Carol Johnson
Charles Miles	Charlotte Babcock	Jane Doble	Madge Edwards	Elaine Nelson
Hicksbert (Lloyd) Grant	Faye Smith	Carol Wolcott	Adelle Wright	



**Please Remember These Connecticut Conference Churches in Your Prayers**

**Storrs**

Storrs Congregational Church UCC

**Stratford**

First Congregational Church of Stratford

**Storrs**

Storrs Korean Church UCC

**Stratford**

Lordship Community Church UCC

**Suffield**

First Church of Christ Congregational, UCC



**ANNOUNCEMENTS** Welcome Guests! We are so glad you are here and invite you to join us after Worship for Coffee Hour.

The Coffee Hour Host this morning is Deacon Carolyn Delgado.

Today's Head Usher is Oz Gibbs.

Today's Lay Reader is Deacon Anne Weaver.

Our Nursery is open every Sunday during the 10 a.m. Worship. Please see one of our ushers and they will be happy to direct you.

**The Sunday Bulletin is now available to read at**

[www.FirstChurchBloomfield.org](http://www.FirstChurchBloomfield.org)



*This Week at a Glance...*

Looking Ahead:

Lectionary possibilities for next week include:

Isaiah 2: 1-5; Psalm 122; Romans 13: 11-14; **Matthew 24: 36-44**

<b>Sunday, Nov 27</b>	8:00 am	Bible Discussion	Living Room
	10:00 am	Worship	Meeting Room
	12:30 pm	New Birth Community Church	Metzger Chapel
<b>Monday, Nov 28</b>	7:00 pm	Narcotics Anonymous	Fellowship Hall
<b>Tuesday, Nov 29</b>	9:15 am	Exercise	Fellowship Hall
<b>Wednesday, Nov 30</b>	9:30 am	Jump Bunch	Fellowship Hall
	6:30 pm	Cantata Rehearsal	Music Suite
	7:00 pm	Alcoholics Anonymous	Counting Room
	7:00 pm	New Birth Community Church	Metzger Chapel
<b>Thursday, Dec 1</b>	10:00 am	Bible Study	Living Room
<b>Friday, Dec 2</b>	6:00 pm	Holiday Craft Fair	Fellowship Hall
	9:15 am	Exercise	Fellowship Hall
	7:30 pm	Alcoholics Anonymous	Counting Room
<b>Saturday, Dec 3</b>	6:00 pm	Birthday Party (Rental)	Fellowship Hall

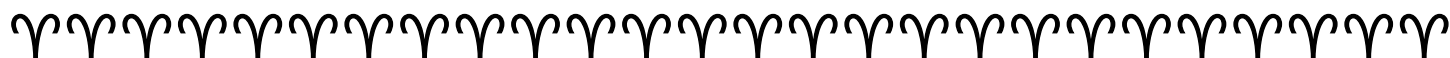
**BLOOMFIELD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH COMMUNITY FOOD KITCHEN**

297 School Street, corner of Wintonbury Ave & School St. Children and Families and ALL are welcome. For information please call 860-242-5641 or 860-874-7679.

**Volunteers are needed to help serve once a quarter.**

For more information, call Sally Foster 860-243-0274

Saturday, December 3, 2016 EVERY SATURDAY 11:30 AM – 1 PM



**NEXT SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2016**

**COMMUNION SUNDAY**

**PASTOR ED'S SERMON: "A VISION OF PEACE"**

**SCRIPTURES – ISAIAH 11: 1-10 & MATTHEW 3: 1-3, 7-10**

**"COME AND INVITE OTHERS ...SHARE GOD'S**

**WELCOMING SPIRIT"**

**Save the Date!**

**Sunday, December 4, 2016**

**After Worship**

**Pastoral Search - Second Hour Listening Circle**

The Pastoral Search Team will be hosting the first in a series of Second Hour Listening Circles on Sunday, December 4, 2016.

Please join us in Fellowship Hall after worship for this opportunity to help us discern who we are, where we are going and who we will call to join us in our journey. Refreshments will be served.

Thanks,

Your Pastoral Search Team



**N O V E M B E R**

## Children/Youth Worship Services

A reminder that on Communion *Sunday each month* our children will participate in the Music Worship experience. We are again appealing to parents, guardians, and friends to assist us in this endeavor which began in October and will continue throughout the church school year 2016-2017 (October – June). The musical offering can be instrumental, vocal or liturgical dance; it can be solo, duet, a group, etc. Classmates and other children/youth that are not members of this church are welcome to participate. It must be adequate and fruitful – **not a performance but an act of worship**. Please **email** the name of the child/youth, their instrument if applicable, to the Minister of Music, Eustace Straker ([straepipes@yahoo.com](mailto:straepipes@yahoo.com)). God bless!



**Backpacks of food are again being packed in our church basement on Thursday afternoons to help feed hungry Bloomfield/Hartford families on weekends. Any boxed Macaroni and Cheese or granola bars would be greatly appreciated. Please leave them in the bin located in Fellowship Hall.**

**Thank you for your generosity.**

**Please contact Judi Bunker with questions 860 242 6192 or The Mission Committee/Eunice Medweather director of the program.**





FCCB Women's Fellowship

# *Christmas Craft Night*

Come spend an afternoon making Christmas gift tags!

Friday, December 2, 2016  
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Class Limited to 20

Call

Angela Maine at  
860-674-9772 to register  
or email:

[awmaine@comcast.net](mailto:awmaine@comcast.net)

Fee: \$5.00

All supplies provided.

(Although do not hesitate to bring your own paper crafting supplies.)

Secure your space with cash, or **check made payable to:**

First Congregational Church Bloomfield

memo: WF Christmas Craft



# LIVE NATIVITY SCENE



**We will be on the front lawn of the church with our little crèche and baby Jesus (probably a doll). Costumes are available for anyone to wear.**

**(music, refreshments and tree lighting)**

Put on warm shoes and throw a blanket over your shoulders.

**COLORS OF THE SEASON!  
Tree Lighting Ceremony  
On the Town Green in Bloomfield  
Thursday, December 1, 2016 starting at  
5:30 pm**

# Help Make UCC Voices Heard at the State Capitol



**Michele Mudrick**

11/10/2016

Now, more than ever, we need our voices heard.

The good news is that here in Connecticut, we can make that happen.

The Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ is made up of 237 churches and approximately 66,000 people across the state of Connecticut.

There are 187 State Legislators (36 State Senators and 151 State Representatives - find yours at [www.cga.ct.gov](http://www.cga.ct.gov)).

That is fewer than one legislator per church.

What if each State Legislator had a relationship with at least one member of a UCC church in the state? Imagine the impact!

My part-time ministry as your Legislative Advocate seeks to advance the public policy agenda of CTUCC. The agenda is determined by the Resolutions passed at the Annual Meetings of the Conference. You can see what some of those policy issues are on our [Economic Justice](#) page.

Establishing relationships with State Representatives and State Senators is very important in this work. They want to hear from me and, more importantly, from YOU, the constituent. Together we can make it happen.

If you feel called to be that person to call or email your State Representative or State Senator when there is an issue important to CTUCC, please join the new **CTUCC Advocate Corps**,

# **The First Congregational Church in Bloomfield**

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Welcome to the First Congregational Church in Bloomfield  
We hope that you find comfort, joy & inspiration in this time of worship;  
and renewed energy for your journey of faith. You are invited to remain after the  
service this morning for refreshments and informal conversation.

## **SCHEDULE**

Bible Discussion is held at 8 am each Sunday  
Worship is held at 10 am each Sunday  
Bell Choir Rehearsals on Monday evenings at 6 pm  
Choir Rehearsals on Wednesday evenings at 7 pm

## **STAFF**

Rev. Edwin O. Ayala, Interim Pastor  
Andrea Davey-Mercer, Administrative Assistant  
Dorine DeCarli, Director of Christian Education  
Eustace Straker, Minister of Music  
Shantel Bremmer, Director of FCC Child Development Center  
Building Management is provided by Michelle Alves and JEM Services.

## **CHURCH OFFICE**

Monday – Friday                      8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Phone:                                      860-242-0776

Fax:    860-243-8035

Email:                      [office@FirstChurchBloomfield.org](mailto:office@FirstChurchBloomfield.org)

All Staff can be reached by contacting the Church Office.

The Child Development Center can be reached at 860-242-0183 or  
[preschool@FirstChurchBloomfield.org](mailto:preschool@FirstChurchBloomfield.org).

## **Pastor Edwin O. Ayala:**

In the event of an emergency (death, serious illness, deep spiritual or  
emotional need) please feel free to call Pastor Ayala at 860-242-0776 x 201,  
© 860-836-6651 or email him [pastor@firstchurchbloomfield.org](mailto:pastor@firstchurchbloomfield.org)  
or [eointersections33@yahoo.com](mailto:eointersections33@yahoo.com)

Visit our church's website: [www.FirstChurchBloomfield.org](http://www.FirstChurchBloomfield.org)