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 & worshiping 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!

January 28, 2007 **CHAPEL COMMUNION** **8:00AM**

The battle we face everyday is that people keep trying to make us less than we know we ought to be. And our task is to realize it and find the courage to resist. The world wants you to be like everyone else, so the battle is for your personhood. And what makes this especially hard is that the battle is often waged against you by those who say they love you. -- Glenn Graves --

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: Jesus Christ offered Himself as help for the hopeless and hope for the helpless.
PEOPLE: Christ calls us to be His Body: to proclaim His name and display His character.
PASTOR: We have heeded the summons, and we gather here to catch again His vision and renew our enthusiasm for His mission.
PEOPLE: Let us lift up our hearts and voices praising the One who trusts us with so great a task and challenge!

Hymn of Praise: #454 *Lord, I Want to Be a Christian*
*Prayer of General Confession (unison)

Loving God, we know that You call us by name and we are Yours, but too often we fail to hear and respond. We know that You call us to love You and serve Your purposes, but too often, we avoid listening by filling our lives with busyness and hurriedness. We know that You call us to stand up for what is good, right and true, even when others disagree or get angry, but too often we lack courage and commitment. Forgive us, O God, and help us talk the talk and walk the walk, following Your call. 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 JEREMIAH 1:4-10 & LUKE 4:21-30
Sermon THAT'S JUST THE WAY IT IS… ? 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 by the Gagnon family in loving memory of their parents: William & Margaret Stuckey and Rita Gagnon. **Our 2007 *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: Isabella Rose Leggett, daughter of Jamie Leggett & Meghan McNicholas Leggett, receives the Sacrament of Christian Baptism at 11:15am today. Susan Parsons had surgery this week. Alan Beaudoin will have surgery tomorrow at Yale-New Haven Hospital. We pray for the Wasserman family, grieving the death of Nancy's dad & for Gloria Gelpke & family, grieving the death of her granddaughter. We continue to pray for Pat Diego; John Zigmont; Mary Carter; Shirley Penfield; Janet Crocker; Betsy Roberts; Maureen Curtis; Pat Livingstone; & our Stephen Ministers & care-receivers.

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PEACE CAFÉ*:** Our Church Council has officially re-named Fellowship Hall (under Meetinghouse). It will now be called ***Peace Café. Plan to join us on **Saturday**, **February 10**, for **our grand opening**, starting with a wonderful church family **pot-luck supper** in Memorial Hall at **6:00pm** to get acquainted with new and long-time members. Then we will adjourn to **Peace Café** for a special **dedication** of our new coffee house and theater, followed an evening of fun, music (by very talented church friends) & film. Anyone wishing to perform a song or two should contact Dee Elloian (860-674-8844) ASAP. You'll LOVE it!

***SOUPER BOWL OF CARING*:** NEXT Sunday (*Super Bowl Sunday*) is *Souper Bowl of Caring Sunday*. Our youth join youth nationwide collecting money for the hungry & hurting. In 2006, 11,000 groups in all 50 states & beyond generated over $5 million. All money is donated to local charities selected by the participants. Our young people will hold soup pots at all exits for *Bread for Life*, our community soup kitchen. Please support our youth in loving our neighbors by dropping $1 into a soup pot next Sunday!

ASH WEDNESDAY IS FEBRUARY 21st: Our holiest season, Lent, begins on Wednesday, 2/21. We offer **3 *Ash Wednesday Services of Penance***, when you may receive ashes. Services are at **7:00AM in Chapel** (30 min.), **12:00Noon in Meetinghouse** (30 min.) & **7:00PM in Meetinghouse** (45 min.). Plan to attend one. A luncheon ($3) follows the 12:00N service.

SACRED CIRCLE COVENANT GROUPS will be offered during Lent. As a Lenten discipline, we hope all church members & friends will attend one. It's a 5-week commitment (2/26 - 4/1) spending 1½ - 2 hours/week in a group with 6 to 8 others from church exploring & learning to live according to *The Sacred Circle of Discipleship* (that Gordon presented in a 3-part sermon series in October). Groups will be at different times on different days for your convenience. SOME sign-up sheets are available TODAY near our Chapel & ramp (to Village Green Nursery School). More are coming. Please sign-up ASAP!

PASTA DINNER: We thank all who helped out, especially Linda Accuosti, our coordinator.

LAST CALL FOR JEWISH SABBATH: The Jewish Congregation has invited all interested to attend their environmental Sabbath service THIS Friday, 7pm. Sign-up next to Gordon's office.

OUR CHURCH *GODSPELL* TRIP IS SOLD OUT, but limited tickets are still available through *The Warner Theater* in Torrington (small theater across from main theater). Call them direct: (860) 489-7180.

PUZZLE SWAP on Sunday, 2/25, all day in Memorial Hall. Bring in & take home puzzles for adults & children (children's puzzles not more than 100 pieces). For info, contact Lois Hall (860-828-4219).

WINTER ART CAMP: Award-winning artist & teacher, John Baker, offers an ***Art Camp*** February vacation (2/19 - 2/23) for kids (with lessons in painting, drawing, clay, collage, mixed media & illustration) in our new *Peace Café*. Sessions are 2 hours (grades 1-3 = 9:30-11:30am & grades 4-7 = 1:30-3:30pm). Also learn about art from around the world & help friends create artwork for our new *Peace Café*. Cost: $150 (includes all materials). Register today; space is limited. Contact John (203-536-5642 or at Johnnysings@excite.com).

WE CAN DO BETTER THAN AN A-! Our pledge income for the first 6 months of our fiscal year (7/1/06-12/31/06) was 92% of what was pledged. That give us an **A-**! Please help us raise it to an **A+**!

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.

CHECK OUT OUR CHURCH'S WEBSITE, www.firstchurchsouthington.org. You'll love it!