

December 13, 2017

Steeple News & Views

Dear Friends of Second Church,

I am in that part of the Christmas season where my best intentions for the season are starting to come undone.

Each year, I resolve to get started early with my wrapping, make time for quiet and prayer, listen to more music (Annie Lennox's Christmas CD remains my favorite, at least in principle), and let myself really settle into the festivity.

I also have this vision that I'll have found the perfect gift for each person, and secured it, months ago, leaving me little to do in December except watch "It's a Wonderful Life" and drink hot chocolate.

Well, once again I'm not quite there yet.

Advent, the season before Christmas, is often described as one of "waiting and expectation."

But in our world, "expectations" have come to mean something different than they once did. When we talk about "expectations," we're often referring to measurement and evaluation in some way. I shudder to think of the offices where Monday morning post-mortems of Christmas will unfold: "So did Christmas meet or exceed your expectations this year?"

If I'm honest, I know that my intentions for the season are, in their own way, about those sort of expectations, too — was I organized enough about the tasks of Christmas this year? Was I tracking who-likes-what closely enough that I was "ready to go" ahead of the predictable bottlenecks?

If I'm not careful, that kind of "expectation" can turn Christmas into little more than an exercise in clearing my desk before a vacation.

Advent is supposed to take us outside of all that — to remind us about a bigger sort of hope and imagination. It's about Expectation with a capital "E."

It's less about practicalities (important as those are) and more about remembering what it feels like to dream.

This seems to have gotten harder for us, and is all the more important for just that reason.

Our gathering, our exchanging gifts, our effort at getting lights on a tree and remembering to water it — all "the things" of Christmas aren't just another to-do list to get through. They're invitations to dream again. To say how much we love and feel grateful for one another. To practice caring.

Because the expectations that matter most are not the little performance measures we can come to live by all too easily. The expectations that matter are the ones that give us life and hope — the expectation of an even greater love that is to come, for us and for all people.

May we all find our spirits brightened by those kinds of expectations in these coming weeks.

See you in church,

Max

REJOICE
always
PRAY
continually
GIVE THANKS
in all circumstances
I THESS 5:16-18

Max's sermon this week is:

"What do you say..."

Based on Scripture from
John 1:6-8, 19-22

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

[Click here to listen to our sermon library online](#)

Stay for our final Adult Ed Program of 2017:

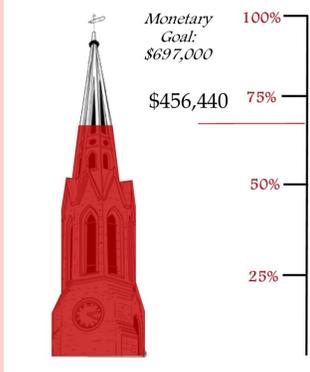
Jesus, Mary & Joseph



December 17 After the 10:30 a.m. service

There is more to the story... come find out for yourself

Second Congregational Church of Greenwich
2018 Stewardship Campaign
Amount Raised as of: December 13, 2017



Stewardship Update

Our 2018 Stewardship Campaign is underway! Be sure to check in & see our progress or donate online by using the links below:

[Stewardship Update](#)

[Donate Online](#)



IN MEMORIAM

Elizabeth Moore passed away Sunday, December 10, 2017. Elizabeth was a Second Church member for over 54 years. We extend our prayers and condolences to Elizabeth's son and family.

Bill Gerecke, a Second Church member for over 37 years, passed away last week. Bill served as President of the Church Council in 1989 and 1990, he also served on the Council as Chair of Finance and Administration, and on the Nominating Committee for several years. We extend our condolences and prayers to Bill's son Jeff Gerecke and daughter-in-law Sarah Gerecke and granddaughters Renata and Claudia Gerecke. A memorial service will be held on Thursday, December 21 at 2:00 p.m. at Second Church.

2017 Donations

2017 is quickly coming to an end! It would be helpful to the church office if pledge payments could be completed prior to Christmas. For your tax records, payments must be received in the church office or postmarked by December 31. Please be sure to clearly mark on your check to which year the funds should be applied (2017, or 2018 if you are prepaying).



Stock donations are a great way to complete a pledge. Your broker will send the stock to our bank, where it will be liquidated. Because of privacy laws in stock transactions, your broker may not designate your name. Please advise in writing of your intention to pay this way. Please contact Julie Muratore at Julie@2cc.org for detailed instructions if you are going to donate stock.

[Click here to donate directly online](#)

The Envelope please... 2018 Offering Envelope Update

Using offering envelopes is a matter of personal preference. Envelopes are used by donors who make an annual pledge and by those who do not pledge but give when they are able to do so. They provide additional privacy, the option to make cash donations, and serve as a reminder to keep up with donations to the church.

If you would like to have one assigned to you, or if you have previously received envelopes you no longer use, please call Gloria in the church office.



Coffee Hour Hosts Needed:

Please email [Stacey Brown](#)
with a date that you are
available to help out.
Thank you!

December Music at 2CC

12/ 17	Youth Choir Christmas Music
12/ 24	Last Sunday In Advent (regular 10:30 service)
12/24	*3:30 Children's Pageant *6:30 Festival Service- Choir, Brass, Tympani, Violinist, Soloists 11:15 Candlelight Service
12/25	A Country Christmas Service, featuring piano, violin & mandolin

Please note NEW service times for Christmas Eve

**Please note NEW Christmas
Service times below...**

Christmas Service Times

Christmas Eve: December 24

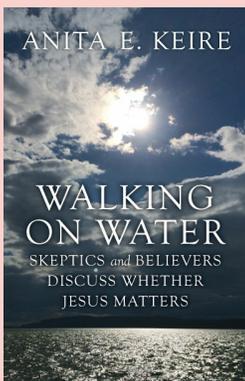
Regular Worship 10:30 a.m.
Family Service 3:30 p.m.
Festival Service 6:30 p.m.
Candlelight Service 11:15 p.m.

Christmas Morning: December 25

Christmas Service 10:30 a.m.

Second Congregational Church

2cc.org



"Resurrection Dialogues and Walking on Water by Anita Keire will be available for purchase following Sunday's worship services.

For each purchase, she will give away a copy of her *Parent's Guide to Prayer*. These books will make good gifts to family and friends."

Do you "Like" us?



Are you following us on social media? No? You're missing out on a lot of inspiration & fun!

If you take pictures during the service(s) or on church grounds at any of our events please be sure to share the love on social media by tagging @2ccGreenwich on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) & [Instagram](#)



For the month of December,
Neighbor to Neighbor is in need of Cereal, Canned Fruit, Pasta, and Jelly.

Please consider donating these items to our foodbasket for the December collection. All donations are brought to Neighbor to Neighbor and are greatly appreciated.