



December 13, 2023

Dear Friends of Second Church,

I don't know if the 2003 Christmas movie "Elf" particularly resonates with all clergy, but it does with me.

If you don't know the movie, it's a fish-out-of-water story (as are so many of the great Christmas movies, if you think about it), specifically about a human, raised by elves in the North Pole (long story), who arrives in New York just before Christmas to search for his biological father.

New York City, in general, and his father, in particular, aren't much geared toward Christmas, which the "Elf" visitor finds incomprehensible — and for the jaded people he encounters, his over-enthusiasm scans more like mania, for the most part.

It interferes with life, sometimes hilariously, sometimes just clumsily, until, slowly, he begins to convince the people around him that, actually, he's the one who's actually living.

The movie's particular resonance for clergy is more in the over-enthusiasm, I think.

Like Buddy the Elf, we can go overboard on decorating every inch of space.

Like him, too, the momentum of Christmas can find us eating things like spaghetti with maple syrup for breakfast, or bragging about how we got "40 whole minutes of sleep last night."

Most of all, though, we share the project of trying to call people into Christmas, especially by modeling our own joy in its traditions and our hope in its aspirations.

We are a bit more familiar with life as it is here, south of the North Pole, and its rhythms and priorities have taught us to be mindful of our enthusiasm in ways that Buddy the Elf hasn't even started to master.

Yet Christmas offers us a glimpse of how our world might — and in many ways, should — be, and that's worth remembering for all of us.

The power of a fish-out-of-water story is its ability to make us think about the water in which we're swimming.

In its deep call to peace on earth and good will toward all, Christmas shows us what life in God actually looks like.

The arrival of the baby points to how we, too, might be among those who actually

live.

See you in church,

Max

Join us this Season...

Sunday:
8:30 & 10:30 a.m.

Christmas Eve:
3:30, 6:30 & 11:15 p.m.

Sermons are always
available online:
[2CCSermons](#)

If you can't make it in person, join us
via [Livestream for our 10:30
a.m.](#) Sunday service.

" Because of You, Our Church Changes Lives"

The 2024 Stewardship Program is underway. We hope that you have had the opportunity to view our videos and the brochure about our mission for 2024 at Second Congregational Church. Please remember to complete your pledge card and return it to the Church Office.



Click here to learn more about our 2024 Stewardship Campaign

Chancel Choir Fall Schedule

Rehearsals at 11:45 a.m.
in the Chapel:

Children's Chapel at 2CC

Nursery care for infants to age 4
starts at 10:15 a.m. Deacons can
help direct you to our nursery

December 17

Chancel Choir in Worship
December 24

No previous experience is necessary.

Attend rehearsals/services when you are in town and able to join us.

All you need is a love for singing!
The choir is open to those who are high school age and older.

[Email Alexander with any questions](#)

room.

Children ages kindergarten and up are encouraged to start worship with their parents at 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Those who wish may depart for Children's Chapel and Choir with Jenny at about 10:45 a.m.

Registration not required but helpful for us to best know and love your child.

[Click here to register for Children's Chapel](#)

[Check out upcoming events for Youth on our website](#)

[Email Khaleigh for more information](#)

Christmas is coming...



Our annual Angel Tree is up in the Sanctuary and the Congregation is asked to help give families in need in our community a special holiday. Please stop by after the service and consider being a 2CC Angel. Cash, checks, and credit cards accepted. If you prefer to donate online, Click the link below for our Virtual Angel Tree. Contact Georgia Harding 203-940-1010 or Dorothy Mayfield at 203-629-9424 if you have any questions.

[Click here to donate to the Angel Tree online](#)



Christmas Eve at 2cc...

Christmas Eve Worship:

- Regular Worship at 10:30 a.m.
- Family at 3:30 p.m.
(outdoor pageant with live animals)
- Festival at 6:30 p.m.
- Candlelight at 11:15 p.m.

Christmas Day: Worship at 10:30 a.m.

Details at 2CC.org



Christmas Eve Pageant Q & A!

Q. Is the pageant open to all?

A. Yes! All ages are welcome, congregants and guests. **We will distribute costumes starting at 3:00 p.m. on December 24 on the Mead Lawn** with hot chocolate for any families that want to join the Pageant as Angels, Shepherds, or baby animals. Please dress accordingly (costumes will be going over coats). Also... We will be outside for the Christmas Eve Pageant & will have special animal guests joining us!

Q. Can I have a lead role the pageant?

A. Yes! But if you would like a lead role please contact Jenny@2cc.org by December 19.

Q. Are there going to be rehearsals for the pageant?

A. We will be offering one walk through rehearsal for lead parts on Wednesday, December 20 at 4:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary with a pizza party to follow. All are welcome, RSVP's appreciated (Jenny@2cc.org).

Please know if there is anything on your child's heart or mind to help make this season a little extra merry or bright, please reach out to Jenny anytime.

Wonderful news about our Moms' Group...

The week before Thanksgiving, 2CC was awarded a \$500 Greenwich Health Improvement Partnership grant from Greenwich Hospital to support the community work of our Moms' Group, led by Jenny Byxbee.

According to Kathy Carley Spanier, Director of Community Health at Greenwich Hospital, the grant recognizes "initiatives that help nourish mind, body and spirit. This is a wonderful partnership we hope continues



to thrive.”

As Jenny explains, “Moms’ Group is an important part of how 2CC is seeking to engage community members and congregants in the life of the church beyond Sunday mornings. It sponsors our ‘Coffee and Connection’ series on Saturday mornings, Friday yoga, Tai Chi, and many other things. With the need for both childcare and paid instructors, the programs benefit directly from the financial support of 2CC and other community partners.”

In a year when Surgeon General Vivek Murthy has identified isolation as a significant public health concern, these opportunities to gather, make new friends, and engage in physical movement are particularly important—especially for new moms, newcomers to Greenwich, and seniors (although any of us would benefit).

Other organizations in town agree. In fact, Greenwich Hospital is the third to offer financial support that will sustain and expand the work of Moms’ Group, which has received over \$1800 in grants this year.

To find out more information, email [Jenny](#).

It was a GREAT weekend at 2cc...

Teddy Bear Story Hour continues to be a wonderful success... thank you to our special guests, Santa, Mrs. Claus & Steve Scroggins!





Another amazing Gingerbread Workshop on December 2...

Thank you to Lisa Hellman, Alicia Tiberio, and Alli Hawes and everyone that made Gingerbread house workshop possible!





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