



See you this
Summer!
Sunday at 9:30 a.m.
(In our Air-Conditioned Chapel)
2CC.org



June 18, 2025

Dear Friends of Second Church,

It was just as summer began after 10th grade that I read Thoreau's *Walden* for the first time, which left me trying to imagine what it might be to live simply — or to avoid the life of “quiet desperation” lived by most men (his word), according to Thoreau.

On the Connecticut shoreline in the summer of 1986, less than a year after the triumphant return of Old Coke and a few months after Chernobyl, when the big thing among us was who had their license and who didn't, simplicity was harder to imagine than quiet desperation.

Nevertheless, I tried.


For starters, one thing I thought it might mean was avoiding the seemingly needless luxury of *Topsiders* and settling for flip flops from the 5 and 10, which I then wore everywhere out of principle for the rest of the summer.

I don't remember if it meant anything else.

My friends saw how ridiculous this was but allowed me to proceed, which now seems very kind of them.

As summer wore on, my flip flops began to show signs of their mortality and slowly became more duct tape than flip (or flop). Whatever point I'd thought I was making had finally become silly to me, too.

Yet on the eve of my definitively caving, they staged an intervention, insisting



that what I had going was a streak (even if it was a stupid one), and that streaks were rare, beautiful, and demanded respect. I had to stay strong until Labor Day.

I listened. I stayed strong. I ran the race set before me, as the Apostle Paul might put it — though I doubt he would have rooted much for flip flops over Topsiders.

I'm not sure there were “lessons learned,” exactly.

If there were, one was surely that cultivating simplicity is as much about claiming a new practice as it is letting go of an old one.

Maybe another was that “self-discipline” leans more heavily on those around us than we realize, and that it takes others to make a self.

Or maybe the main takeaway was not to let my mouth write checks that my feet were not prepared to cash.

But there was also a funny beauty in that streak and the affection it elicited. My quixotic search for principles by which to live was a tad dramatic, decidedly preachy, and aching sixteen, but my friends loved me, anyway, and saw this as the price of admission with me. They were willing to pay it (and pretty much still are).

There was a lot of grace in that.

Thoreau was not a theologian, per se, but so much of his thinking about simplicity points to clearing the decks for grace, as we learn to make and maintain more room for God's voice in our lives—for Thoreau, especially in nature, but always in reflection, wonder, and gratitude, whatever might prompt them.

For me, grace was something to discover in flip-flops (with a strong assist from Thoreau).

Wherever God decides to inject grace into our world, He eases our quiet desperation just that much, and teaches us to see an infinitely better one.

May we receive it with joy.

See you in church,



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

If you can't make it in person, join us
via [Livestream for our 9:30 a.m.](#)
Sunday service.

Children's Chapel Update...

Starting Sunday, June 15 to Labor Day weekend, all children are encouraged to meet in the nursery from 9:30-10:30 a.m. for a very special summer worship experience for infants to school age children entering grade 5.

This is in alignment with our Summer worship schedule.

Children's Chapel this summer will include worshipping outside, special guests, crafts, games, scripture lessons, prayer, and worship services designed with young hearts and boundless energy in mind. Also, a warm welcome back to our beloved Children's Chapel helpers, Anne Roth and Bailey Petrizzi!

For more information please feel free to contact me anytime at Jenny@2cc.org

Around Town...

Greenwich Library kicks off it's summer reading program this week!

Guess what? The Children's Story Bible counts too!

Join us each Sunday morning from 9:30-10:30 for some summer scripture, activities and stories in Children's Chapel

[Click here to learn more about the Summer Reading Program](#)

Greenwich Library | Byram Shubert Library | Cos Cob Library

2025 Children's Library Summer Reading



June 9 – August 15, 2025

Second Congregational Church | 139 East Putnam Avenue | Greenwich, CT 06830 US

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