



The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme

**2 Ferry Road,
Old Lyme, Connecticut
(860) 434-8686
Website: www.fccol.org**

SUNDAY WORSHIP

Steven R. Jungkeit, Senior Minister
Laura Fitzpatrick-Nager, Senior Associate Minister
Carleen R. Gerber, Associate Minister
Simon Holt, Director of Music

March 8, 2026

Third Sunday of Lent Worship Service

10:00 AM

Prelude

Introit: **“Be Not Silent Unto Us”** by G.B. Pergolesi (1710-1736)

*Processional Hymn: #244 “Like a Tree Beside the Waters ”

*Call to Worship:

In a world that trembles with uncertainty,
where the ground feels unsteady,
we come seeking something deeper than our fear.

**Not a certainty that explains everything,
but a steady hand to hold.**

**Not answers that silence questions,
but a deeper rhythm beneath the noise.**

**Here, we remember:
we are rooted like trees by living water,
held like stones in an ancient foundation,
carried like stars in a widening sky.**

**Let us worship God,
in whom we live and move and have our being.**

*Prayer of Invocation and The Lord’s Prayer

Welcome and Announcements

*Hymn: #430 “The Lord's My Shepherd ”

Children’s Message:

Children’s Song: “This Little Light of Mine”

(Children and youth proceed downstairs. Congregation remains seated)

Offering Invitation

Offertory Anthem: **“Come, Gentle Spirit”** by Marion Wood Chaplin (1914-2014)

*Doxology: Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One. Amen.

*Offering Prayer

Pastoral Prayer

Pastoral Prayer Response: "Hear Our Prayer"

Hear our prayer, O God, hear our prayer, O God; in -

The image shows the first system of musical notation for the Pastoral Prayer Response. It consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff, both in 4/4 time and key of D major. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.

cline your ear to us, and grant us your peace.

The image shows the second system of musical notation for the Pastoral Prayer Response. It consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff, both in 4/4 time and key of D major. The lyrics are written below the treble staff.

Scripture Readings: Romans 8: 31-39, Hebrews 6: 19-20

Sermon: "The Depth Dimension of Human Existence"

Rev. Dr. Steven Jungkeit

*Closing Hymn: #425 "O Love That Will Not Let Me Go"

Benediction

Benediction Response: "The Lord Bless You and Keep You" by Peter Lutkin (1858-1931)

Postlude

*Congregation Standing

We thank you for worshipping with us. Following the life and teachings of Jesus, we are a church that strives to be a place of grace, welcoming all regardless of theological expression, age, race, gender, sexual identity, national origin or financial means. In our Church Constitution we recognize that "each member shall have the undisturbed right to follow the word of God according to the dictates of his, her or their own conscience, under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit." The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme, established in 1665, cherishes this proud Pilgrim tradition. We are honored by your presence among us, and we invite you to help us become what we endeavor to be.

Scripture Readings:

Romans 8: 31-39

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword?

No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Hebrews 6: 19-20

We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered, having become a high priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Choir Anthems

Introit: “Be Not Silent Unto Us”

by G.B. Pergolesi (1710-1736)

Text: Be not silent unto us, O God; neither hold Thou Thy peace, O Lord. Turn Thine ear no longer away from us. Thou Lord, art great and doest wondrous things, for Thou art God alone.

Offertory Anthem: “Come, Gentle Spirit”

by Marion Wood Chaplin (1914-2014)

Text: Come, gentle Spirit, come, I have need of thy healing grace. Come, make me pure within; all my sins erase. Let them, like bonds set free, nevermore my captors be. Humbly to thee I bow; Come gentle Spirit, now. Come, gentle Spirit, come, I have need of thy perfect peace. May calm repose begin, all my fears release; Let them on wings take flight, nevermore to cloud my sight. Not only for this day come, gentle Jesus, stay.

Benediction Response: “The Lord Bless You and Keep You” by Peter Lutkin (1858-1931)

Text: The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord lift his countenance upon you; and give you peace, the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. Amen.

A special thanks to Doug Green who is our organist today!

The flowers this morning are given by Cari Blanchard in memory of David Blanchard, Cari's loving father.

The hosts for the Fellowship Hour this morning are Leslie Rawlings Slezak and Victor Slezak.

The nursery is open today!

Today at FCCOL

"Parents of Younger Children (infants to 4th grade) Fellowship Hour" Will be meeting in the Sheffield Auditorium right after the service. Parents can meet and connect while the kids play!! We will be asking YG babysitters to be there to help!

Upcoming Events and Meetings

Ladies Who Stitch Monday, March 9th at 10:00 am in the Sheffield Auditorium.

The Benevolent Society Luncheon Tuesday, March 10th at 12:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

Board of Trustees Meeting Tuesday, March 10th. at 7:00 pm in the Library.

ReBbellion Rehearsal Wednesday, March 11th at 4:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

Handbell Ringers Rehearsal Wednesday, March 11th at 6:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

Choir Rehearsal Wednesday, March 11th at 7:30 pm in the Sheffield Auditorium.

Bible Study Thursday, March 12th at 11:00 am in the Library or on Zoom.

Shoreline Food Pantry Saturday, March 14th at 8:30 am in the Fellowship Hall.

Weekly Bible Study

Please join us as we continue to discuss The Book of Exodus: Stories of Exile and the Search for Freedom on Thursday, March 12th and continue every Thursday from 11:00 -12:00 pm in the Library. Call or email the church for the Zoom link.

The Benevolent Society's March Luncheon Tuesday, March 10th

The Benevolent Society's first spring luncheon on Tuesday, March 10th at 12:00 pm. A warm brunch-inspired meal prepared by our own chef Rick Strickhart so arrive in time to get seated and comfortable.

As well as running the kitchen and preparing the meal, chef Rick will also be entertaining and educating us with a presentation, beginning at 1pm, that reflects on his travels last year in Korea and Japan. Along with his spectacular photographs, he will discuss topics which include Sumo, Geisha, Shintoism and Korean Costco.

Suggested donation for the luncheon and program is \$5 per person, plus a nonperishable food item for our food bank or a package of disposable diapers for our diaper bank. If you plan to join us at the luncheon, please call the FCCOL office (860-434-8686) by Friday, March 6th to make a reservation so we can be sure to have enough food prepared for all to enjoy.

RSVP: April Vacation: Walking in Their Footsteps Civil Rights Trip - April 11 - 16th

Join us for this special FCCOL Youth trip to Koinonia Farm and other civil rights sites in Georgia! We'll fly into Atlanta and stay one night, then drive to Koinonia Farm (<https://koinoniafarm.org>) in southern Georgia, which will be our home base for 4 nights. While on the Farm, we'll learn about its 80-year civil rights history, engage in service projects, see the birthplace of Habitat of Humanity, explore the Jimmy Carter National Park, and visit the Albany Civil Rights Institute among other highlights.

We have spots available and will be making plane **reservations asap**. Contact Laura for more information: lfitz.nager@gmail.com. Youth scholarships available.

Walt's Pottery at FCCOL: Two Classes Offered

Are you interested in throwing clay on the wheel and getting into some mud up to your elbows? Morning and evening classes begin Tuesday, **March 17th through April 14th**. Open to adults of all levels. Tuesdays from 10:00-12:00 pm or 6:00-8:00 pm. Email: fccol@fccol.org or call (860) 434-8686 to reserve a spot. Seating is limited. Cost: \$195 plus materials. The morning class will be taught by Betsey Copp and the evening class by Paul Fitzpatrick-Nager.

Adult Forum "But the Bible Says It's Wrong:" Reflections on Biblical Strictures About Same-Sex Relations

Join John Loughery on **Sunday, March 15th** after the 10:00 am worship Service for a talk that will focus on the critical perspectives and outright prohibitions against same-sex intimacy in the Old and the New Testament. He will present a survey of the ways in which different progressive priests, ministers, theologians, and people of faith have reinterpreted these passages in books published over the last fifty years, ending with a recommendation of a recent and highly original examination of the subject, *The Widening of God's Mercy: Sexuality Within the Biblical Story* by Christopher B. Hays and Richard B. Hays (Yale University Press, 2024).

TransParent Group Meeting

Meets monthly on the 3rd Wednesday of every month 5:30-6:30. Next meeting is on **March 18th**. For Parents, Caregivers and Family Members of Trans Youth/Young Adults: Our group provides conversation, a support community and education for parents and caregivers around the issues of transgender, nonbinary, and gender-diversity. For more information email us at: fccol@fccol.org.

FCCOL Moth Night and Potluck Dinner

It's Back! Due to popular demand, another **FCCOL Moth Night** has been scheduled for **Friday, March 20th**, at 6:00 pm. Bring the whole family for heart-warming stories, grand fellowship, and a hearty potluck meal all in one!

All ages are welcome. Please bring a dish to share if you are able. If you would like to help with the set-up/clean-up, please contact Deb Heminway at: dheminway9@gmail.com.

New London Soup Kitchen

For several decades, our church has been serving a hot meal at the New London Community Meal Center (now known as DINE) on the fourth Sunday of every month. While hot meals are available twice a day a DINE (Monday through Friday), on weekends they struggle to serve one meal each day with the help of volunteers. Right now the number of people seeking this food

assistance is rising dramatically. In January our volunteers served 200 people! We are in need of more volunteers to supplement this important work. If you can help, please leave a message in the office, or call (or text) Carleen at 860-304-2070. Thank you.

Reading the First Four Chapters of *Paradise Lost* on Maundy Thursday

Why *Paradise Lost*? Milton had taken part in a revolt against the monarchy in his time, in an effort to move England toward a fledgling form of democracy. That effort failed, and so Milton wrote his massive poem about the rebellion in heaven, of the fall, and of the consequences of free will. In other words, Milton was grappling with some of the same issues that are emerging once again in our own time, though in a different form. This is a poem that we need right now, for all of its theological, moral, and aesthetic. *Paradise Lost* is divided into 12 books, we will cover the first four of those books this year, on Maundy Thursday.

We'll take breaks between books to stretch our legs, and to get snacks and coffee.

Instead of reading it deep into the night, we're going to read it throughout the day of April 2nd. We'll start promptly at 10 AM. We should finish by 5 or 6 PM. Throughout, we hope to have selections of music sung from Haydn's *Creation*, much of which was inspired by *Paradise Lost*. Then, when we're finished, we'll gather for a simple dinner of soup and bread, followed by the sharing of communion.

Sign ups for readers will begin next Sunday, March 15th. But if you wanted to start preparing, you could do worse than to pick up a copy of the poem, joined by a reading of Orlando Reade's newish book, *What In Me Is Dark: The Revolutionary Afterlife of Paradise Lost*. It's a lively and informative guide.

Flowers Needed for the Sunday Worship Services

We are in need of people to donate flowers for the Sundays worship services. It can be flowers that you have arranged yourself, or you could order flowers and have them delivered, or a plant that you could take home after the service. **Please call Jill Harned (603) 398-9004** to reserve a date and then call the office (860-434-8686) or email at fccol@fccol.org, to let us know the dedication you would like to be printed in the bulletin on the date you picked. Thank you!

IRIS (Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services)

IRIS is helping the homeless and is especially in need of warm adult clothing and twin-sized bedding. Twice a month, a FCCOL volunteer travels to New Haven to deliver collected items. LWS will help by accepting new and gently-used donations for IRIS and for the New London Homeless Hospitality Center. Please leave donations on the Sheffield Stage clearly marked "LWS." (<https://irisct.org>.)

Church World Service Blanket Drive

During February and March, The Benevolent Society collects the annual offering for the CWS Blanket Drive. The Blanket and Kit program was created by CWS to aid those who have lost everything due to disasters. Through your support 17,317 Blankets, 5,400 Emergency Clean-up Buckets, 71,760 Hygiene Kits, 39,000 School Kits and 1,600 Disaster Preparedness Kits were distributed in 2025. Each blanket costs \$10. Please make checks payable to TBS, indicating on the memo line "Blanket Drive." CWS envelopes are available in the pews and may be placed in the offering plate or sent to FCCOL, 2 Ferry Road, c/o TBS. Thank you.

2026 Stewardship Campaign

Very good news! Our very generous members and friends have so far committed \$646,488 in contributions to fund the church in 2026. This is just \$3,512 short of our stretch goal of \$650,000. We have not seen this level of generosity since well before the pandemic. Importantly, funding at this level now allows us to revitalize our benevolence giving by 35% to \$95,000 - again a level not seen since well before the pandemic – and to fund new ministries including immigration assistance. **Thank you all very much.** If you have not yet sent in your pledge card, doing so will put us over the top! Gratefully, The Board of Stewardship.

All This Sainted Difference: A Spiritual Pilgrimage to Brazil, August 10-20, 2026



In her poetry collection *The Cachoeira Tales*, Marilyn Nelson writes of a contemporary group of pilgrims, each with a story to tell, traveling together not to Canterbury, but to Cachoeira, Brazil. There, the pilgrims encounter the Sisters of Our Lady of the Good Death, who blend African, Indigenous, and Catholic ritual elements. Founded by those who had been enslaved during the 19th century, the sisterhood was established to serve the poor, while keeping alive the sacred traditions of Africa, handed down as a precious inheritance from one generation to

the next. Every year in Cachoeira, the Sisters offer a three-day celebration of music and of dance, where the Orixas (African divinities who bear a striking resemblance to Christian saints) come in order to bless, heal, chasten, and encourage contemporary people. It is in Cachoeira that the pilgrims in Marilyn's poems converge. And it is in Cachoeira that pilgrims from FCCOL shall converge this coming August.

This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to explore the African ritual traditions of Brazil. Visiting not only Cachoeira, but locating ourselves in and around the city of Salvador, we'll encounter the rituals, music, dance, foodways, and visual art that have sheltered and protected human lives through generations of hardship. We'll visit *terreiros* (house temples) around the city and throughout the surrounding countryside. And we'll discover how these dynamic and aesthetically charged spiritual systems (Candomblé and Umbanda) have evolved across time. The centerpiece of our journey will be the Feast of Our Lady of the Good Death, where we shall witness how the Sisters become a living bridge between this world and the other.

Designed to resonate and to link with our travels to Haiti, Cuba, New Orleans, and West Africa, our pilgrimage to Cachoeira and Salvador will be organized with the help of our friend Ned Sublette, and his vast network of contacts in Brazil. It is a fabulous opportunity to explore a beautiful part of Latin America (it will be winter in Salvador, meaning we can expect temperatures in the 70's and 80's), together with the history and spirituality of the African descended peoples of Bahia.

Contact Steve Jungkeit for more information, at steven@jungkeit.net.