

THE CHURCHMOUSE

Newsletter of The First Congregational Church, Canton Center, CT

APRIL 2021

From the Pastor

Rev. Brenda Pelc-Faszczka

WE'RE BACK TO IN-PERSON IN APRIL!

We're happy to welcome you back to in-person services, just in time for Holy Week! For a while yet, we will still need to modify our services, as we did last fall: masks required, distanced seating, no congregational singing, no regular Communion, etc., to continue to be diligent about everyone's safety.

All our services, from now on, will also be live streamed (access available on our website), even when they are in person.



- | | |
|--|---|
| Thurs., April 1
7:30 p.m. | Maundy Thursday service in the sanctuary;
Commemoration of Jesus' Last Supper, and
Tenebrae service (reading of the Passion Narrative) |
| Fri., April 2
12 -3 p.m. | Good Friday
Sanctuary open for meditation. |
| Sun., April 4
10 a.m. | Easter Sunday |
| Sun., April 11
10 a.m. | Second Sunday of Easter; Communion
(Note: Communion on 2 nd , rather than 1 st
Sunday this month) |
| Sun., Apr. 18
10 a.m. | Third Sunday of Easter
Earth-Day themed service |
| Sun., Apr. 25 | Fourth Sunday of Easter |

Music Notes

Mary Lou Keefe, Director of Music



With more and more people becoming vaccinated and because of that those same people feeling more secure as a result, I myself have a much more positive attitude and encouragement about the music program and the direction in which it is going. The following is a calendar of events through Easter.

For this Sunday the 21st, Judy Robinson will be soloing with a song from a popular cantata written by one of our favorite composers, Pepper Choplin, who is able to capture in music and words the essence of Lent. Judy will also be singing the two hymns.

On Palm Sunday, one of our famous past members of the choir will present a beautiful Lenten song O Lord Most Holy by Cesar Franck. In addition, Jerry Alonzy will be singing the traditional song for that day, The Palms. Bill and Jerry will be singing the hymns.

On Maundy Thursday, Jim Todd will be singing Libera Me from the Requiem of Faure. He sang that solo when we performed the entire requiem a few years ago. He will also be soloing on the verses of Were You There and other hymns.

On Easter Sunday, there will actually be a choir, albeit small with six or seven volunteers. Linda McAllister is responsible for thinking of doing this and I am so excited about it and grateful to her for the nudge. The choir will be singing the song Victory from Lani Smith's cantata of the same name and also a benediction. I am sure they will be singing the hymns, loud and proud as Jerry would say.

I hope many of you will plan to attend church soon as we are opening on Palm Sunday. If you do, please enjoy the beautiful Lenten and Holy Week music. Thank you to my soloists and choir members.

Deacons' Bench

Tim LeGeyt, Deacon

Prayer in Worship

Our dedication to prayer in worship takes on several types. We pray together out loud as in the Gathering Prayer. We pray together as we recite the Lord's Prayer. We pray as Rev. Brenda shares the Pastoral Prayer, during which we have the opportunity to pray personally and silently, acknowledging those things and loved ones about which and for whom we are concerned.

We know that prayer is an intrinsic part of worship and in its various styles is our time to have a dialogue with God. Of course, we don't have to be in Church to pray. Our dialogue with God is a continuous process that can happen any time, but when we pray together, either out loud or silently, there is an energy that fills the church room as members join their hearts and yearn to feel that God is responding to their petitions.

How much do we pray for ourselves or others, our personal needs or those of ones we love? Do we ask God to hear our prayer or to make a change for the better for someone else? Are we certain that God is in our life, in our hearts and listening to our anguish even before we ask God to be with us? And when we pray together, can we know that our collective prayers are pleasing our Creator with unselfish petitions for goodness to manifest itself.

Let's all hope so.

5 Years of Scrip!

In mid-April 2016, we kicked off the Scrip program at our church. I recall sitting in a church council meeting a few months earlier as the trustees were talking about different ways they were looking to save money or bring in more income. Someone had mentioned the Scrip program to them and after some research, they thought it would be a worthwhile endeavor if someone wanted to run it. Sounds like fun – I offered to give it a go!

Five years and countless coffee hours later, the program has raised nearly \$8000 for the church. While it's nothing to balance the budget on, it's a nice sum for an easy fundraiser. Even through the pandemic, the program rolls on – with a good number of faithful Scrip shoppers still reaching out to purchase gift cards for presents or every day shopping. Though I look forward to the days when I can set up my table again during coffee hour, sell a few gift cards and chat with everyone.

If you don't know about the Scrip program yet, clearly I am not doing my job very well! **Scrip is an easy way you can help raise money for the church by buying gift cards for everyday expenses like groceries, gas, clothing, restaurants and gifts. It is literally “fundraising while you shop” and there are over 750 retailers to choose from.** The best part about Scrip is that you pay for exactly what you get and the church makes money by purchasing the gift cards at less than face value. You can also order scrip online or through the RaiseRight app. Add gift cards to your cart and either pay by check, credit card or through an automatic withdrawal from your checking account. For more information on how to sign up online and get our enrollment code, just reach out. I'm available via phone (860-693-0134), email (c.levine@comcast.net) or find me at church most Sundays.

Thanks for your continued support!

Casey

WE'RE WORKING ON A BRAND NEW WEBSITE! WE'LL NEED YOU!

Larry Minichiello

Our church has engaged the services of a professional website designer to help us create a brand new, updated website.

A small group (Kathy Smith, Larry Minichiello and Rev. Brenda) has been working on content, and soon we'll be looking for the involvement of our congregation in our need for some new photos.

We're anxious to convey our welcoming spirit through the images and other content on our website: watch for more information about how YOU can be part of it!

SUNDAY, APRIL 11 – 11:00 A.M.

A Second Hour presentation on proposed bylaws changes for our church

A sub-committee of the Church Council was formed in early 2020 to review and to recommend updates to our Church's by-laws. Our by-laws provide a foundational framework for organizing administrative capacity, establishment of boards and committees and authority for decision making and spending. It is vital that the members of our congregation are involved in the intent of this structural document in order to ensure that it supports the mission of the church and its members, both individually and collectively. The by-laws of the First Congregational Church of Canton Center call for a congregational meeting to vote on a proposed amendment to the by-laws of the organization. Please plan to attend this important congregational meeting on Sunday, April 25th after our in-person service.

In preparation for this congregational meeting, Church Council is holding a Second Hour discussion to review the draft of amendment 13 to the church's by-laws. This will be an opportunity for church members to question or comment on the proposed draft. This draft will be available at the church office or by requesting an electronic copy from the church office. We hope you will read through the proposed changes in the document and attend this meeting to be held on Sunday, April 11, after the in-person church service. Please note that the By-laws Sub-committee will be continuing to review the by-laws and anticipates recommending some additional changes later in the year.

**NOTICE OF A SPECIAL MEETING of the First Congregational Church,
Canton Center, Connecticut, on Sunday, April 25, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.
OR on subsequent Sundays at 11:00 a.m. until a quorum is obtained.**

AGENDA:

1. Call to order and opening prayer.
2. Reading of the call to the meeting.
3. Presentation of the proposed changes to the Church's by-laws included in Amendment 13
4. Any other business proper to come before the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Bev Sealand, Clerk

LIVE STREAMING - ASSISTANTS NEEDED FOR SERVICES

From Deacon Steve Byko:

While it's a little late for this year's Golden Globes Awards for Church Streaming, there is always next year. But seriously, we need a few additional people to help with operating the new streaming system equipment for the church, each Sunday morning. It's a relatively simple process to operate and Jerry Alonzy has provided helpful diagrams and procedure graphics to guide you. There are a number of preset camera views, as you've seen if you have followed any of the one-line services, so there is no complex camera work.

If you are interested, please contact Steve Byko at (860) 693-6816 or e-mail him at PinchHitre@gmail.com. Interest is limited to the first 50 applicants...so act fast.

Director of Faith Formation
Sarah Pradhan

FAITH FORMATION MINISTRY

Spring is here for CE!

We had a fun time making pretzels (pictures below) for Lent on Facebook live. If you missed a chance to roll, fold and bake with us, you can always go back to our Facebook page, Canton Center Church Kids, and rewatch any of our videos, including our pretzel baking day!

Sunday School will continue to be virtual to finish out our program year. There will be opportunities to meet in person (masked and outdoors) in April, May, and June. Please keep watching our announcements in emails and on social media for these special events.

Thank you to all who came and joined our Easter Egg hunt at the end of March. A fun time was had by all!



CANTON CENTER LITTLE FREE PANTRY

185 Cherry Brook Road, Canton Center
(directly across from the First Congregational Church, Canton Center)

The Canton Center Little Free Pantry is a simple way for neighbors to help neighbors in need.

GIVE WHAT YOU CAN

Place unused, unexpired non-perishable food, hygiene and/or paper items inside the LFP. Donations welcome- please give what you would want to receive.

TAKE WHAT YOU NEED

If you find items in the LFP and need them, take them. Please take only what you need. You determine your need.



QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

CANTON CENTER LFP STEWARD:

CYNTHIA ZDANZUKAS 860-798-5897

cantoncenterlfp@gmail.com



*Our Deepest Sympathy
are extended to the families and friends of:*

*Barbara Lowell
who passed away on January 17, 2021*

and

*Thomas Anderson,
son of Hugh and Marcia Anderson,
who passed away on January 17, 2021*



*A very special thank you to
Casey Levine
for her dedicated hard work in
organizing our Scrip Program
for the past 5 years!*

God is still speaking !!!

.....

Visit our website at cantoncenterchurch.org

Listen to recorded **Sermons and Music**
from worship services!

Like us on Facebook 

APRIL 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 MAUNDY THURSDAY Worship 7:30 pm	2 GOOD FRIDAY Sanctuary Open 12-3 pm	3
4 EASTER Worship 10:00 am Lilies/Tulips ready for pick up	5	6 Deacons Meeting 6:30 pm	7 Missions Meeting 7:00 pm	8	9	10
11 Worship & Communion 10:00 am Second Hour 11:00 am	12 Trustees 7:00 pm	13	14 Council Meeting 7:00 pm	15	16	17
18 Worship 10:00 am	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 Worship 10:00 am Congregational Meeting 11:00 am (Food Collection)	26	27	28	29	30	



The Churchmouse
The First Congregational Church
(United Church of Christ)
184 Cherry Brook Road
P O Box 133
Canton Center, CT 06020-0133

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE PAID
AVON CT
PERMIT NO 426

Change Service Requested



THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
184 Cherry Brook Road PO Box 133
Canton Center, CT 06020-0133

Office

(860)693-4581

Kristen DiMattia, Office Manager
office@cantoncenterchurch.org
M-F 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Pastor

(860)693-4207

Rev. Dr. Brenda Pelc-Faszczka
pastor@cantoncenterchurch.org

Organist/Director of Music:

(860)693-4216

Mary Lou Keefe
music@cantoncenterchurch.org

Director of Faith Formation:

(860)810-3070

Sarah Pradhan
ce@cantoncenterchurch.org

Worship ~ Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

cantoncenterchurch.org