

# THE CHURCHMOUSE

Newsletter of The First Congregational Church, Canton Center, CT

October 2021

## From the Pastor

Rev. Brenda Pelc-Faszczka

### To Love and ... Destroy?



*What is it that would cause a person to love and worship God, yet destroy what God has made? Any father who, upon receiving a handmade birthday card from his five-year-old son, proceeded to ball it up in the child's face would be called cruel. Any woman who, upon receiving roses from her husband, threw them in the trash would be called uncaring. And likewise, I propose that any people who, upon receiving a beautiful Earth from the Creator, proceed to destroy it and render it unlivable can be called ungrateful.*

T.L. Gray, in *Holy Ground: A Gathering of Voices on Caring for Creation*

This summer I read *The Uninhabitable Earth: Life After Warming*, by journalist David Wallace-Wells. It's a breathtaking view of what has happened, is happening, and is on the way to happening on planet earth because of human patterns in our current and recent civilizational moment, and the very first line of the book gets your attention: "It is worse, much worse, than you think." I read those opening words, my heart pounded, and I kept reading, to the end. This author doesn't say anything a lot of other scientists, researchers and writers haven't also said, and have been saying for decades: we've already done a huge amount of damage to this earth and its natural systems, some of it already irreversible, and now the urgent challenge is not to do even more, while there's still a small amount of time to change course and keep this planet habitable for our children and grandchildren.

The weather events in just our own country as of late – worse fires, bigger, stronger and more frequent storms, hotter temperatures – ought to have awakened us, if we weren't already. Response to climate crisis is a central moral issue for people of faith, those for whom the natural world isn't just so many elements, gases and species, but *creation*. God's creation. The gift of a benevolent Creator, infused with the love of that Creator, and given to the creatures with the idea that we would love it too, and take care of it. That's going to take a change of course. Which, in turn, is going to take a change of heart.

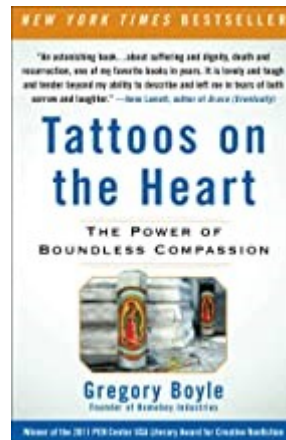
I think of a memorable line from the writings of the spiritually- and environmentally-oriented poet and novelist Wendell Berry: "*Whether we and our politicians know it or not, Nature is party to all our deals and decisions, and she has more votes, a longer memory, and a sterner sense of justice than we do.*" That gets your attention too.

It is time, and past time, for people of faith to see this as what some voices are calling it: THE central moral issue of our time. May our hearts, minds and spirits be ready and willing to engage.

Faithfully,

Rev. Brenda

## Fall Book Discussion:



***Tattoos on the Heart:  
The Boundless Power of Compassion***  
by Gregory Boyle

**Tues. evenings, Oct. 19 and 26 ~ 7 – 8:30 p.m. on Zoom**

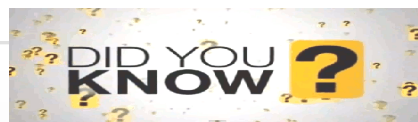
This 2010 best-selling book is a selection of beautiful, heart-opening stories told by the author, a Jesuit priest who founded Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles, to work with gangs.

From the back cover:

*These essays about universal kinship and redemption are moving examples of the power of unconditional love and the importance of fighting despair. Gorgeous and uplifting, Tattoos on the Heart reminds us that no life is less valuable than another.*

**Rev. Brenda will facilitate. Please contact her by Tues., Oct. 12 to sign up ([pastor@cantoncenterchurch.org](mailto:pastor@cantoncenterchurch.org)). We'll read & discuss approximately half the book in each session (please obtain your own copy).**

**If you are interested but can't make the dates, please let her know.**



A weekly reminder message is emailed out mid-week with worship information and announcements.

If you are not receiving this and would like to, please send your email to: [office@cantoncenterchurch.org](mailto:office@cantoncenterchurch.org)

## WORSHIP MINISTRY



### Worship in October

- Oct. 3 World Communion Sunday
- Oct. 10 Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
- Oct. 17 Recognition of Long-Time Members
- Oct. 24 Reception of New Members
- Oct. 31 Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost

### Reminder about our pandemic protocols:

Per the current decision of our Church Council, we will continue to require that all be masked while indoors at church (with the exception of those leading parts of worship who are well away from others when doing so) and to forgo coffee hours or any other food events at this time. We will also continue, for the time being, to refrain from passing offering plates or Communion elements.

### Deacon's Bench

Hugh Anderson

Seasons will pass you by. An enduring musical lyric dating all the way back to those long ago college days of the 70's. Extra credit for anyone who remembers the band and album!

Seasons indeed do pass, and here we are in the beginning of yet another beautiful autumn season. Cooler and shorter days, an abundant harvest of apples and fall vegetables, squirrels intently gathering acorns and chestnuts, and of course the first hints of color in what we hear may be an extra brilliant display of fall foliage. The signs of the season are everywhere.

Seasons aside, signs are also everywhere in our lives. Some are the tangible ones that help direct us through each day, like road signs. Others are the spiritual ones that come directly from God and help remind us of the universal connections we have to each other on earth and in heaven alike. There is truly such a short distance between the two!

These past eight months I have taken great comfort in a book written by Laura Lynne Jackson called - wait for it - Signs! It's a view into the secret language of the universe, and I'd like to share in her words a passage that brings it all together, and I think also perfectly reflects the mission we share as a church community:

*Earth is a school where we are all learning a collective lesson in love. We are spiritual beings here to learn about connectivity and kindness. When we trust in the reality of signs, we begin to learn this lesson more rapidly and in the most beautiful and fulfilling way. We begin to actually see the connectivity.*

*We begin to understand that being alive on earth right now, in this moment, is a great gift - and that our choices affect not only our own lives, but also the great tapestry of light and energy that is our world.*

Amen!

## October Missions & Outreach Collection

Mission & Outreach will collect warm clothes to donate to Gifts of Love:  
**coats, jackets, hats, mittens, gloves, etc.** also **toiletries**  
 will continue to be collected for our Wellmore mission.

*Please have clothes clean and in good condition.  
 Donations can be left in the Missions Box next to the kitchen door.*



### Help Wanted – Camera Operator

*Maybe you've always wanted to be a Hollywood director.  
 Or you are just looking for a way to help out a little more. We have the job for you!*

We are looking for one or two additional camera operators  
 to help live stream our service on Sunday mornings.

No special experience is necessary.

On the job training is offered and the commitment is small  
 – once a month (or more or less, as your schedule permits).

You get a nice view from the balcony and are providing an important service  
 for our fellow parishioners who can't currently attend in person.

### A Daily Choice

*Racism destroys kinship. Sexism destroys kinship. Classism destroys kinship. Homophobia destroys kinship. When human beings exile other human beings from the circle of life, they are breaking the hoop of the human nation, tearing apart what God has created. The sin of humanity is not a lifetime stain inherited from mythic ancestors who disobeyed a rule, but a daily choice made by all of us in the here and now, in living relationships that embody our kinship.*

–Steven Charleston, *The Four Vision Quests of Jesus*

## SCRIP IS FUNDRAISING WHILE YOU SHOP!



This Fall is definitely not starting out the way any of us likely envisioned it. It feels a little like 2020 all over again. And like last Fall, since we are not having a traditional coffee hour, we won't be having a dedicated Scrip table set up in church on Sundays. But, also like last Fall, I'll still be at church every week and gift cards are still available for immediate purchase or special order. Kind of like "Where's Waldo", just look around church and you will find me. I might be in the back doing a deacon duty or upstairs doing livestreaming or just in a random pew enjoying the service. Instead of looking for a striped shirt and glasses, just look for that brightly colored, flowered bag! Note that on Sunday, 10/3, Karen Needham will be the flowered bag Scrip lady (just to keep it interesting)!

If you're not attending church in person, I'm just a phone call or an email away (860-693-0134 or [c.levine@comcast.net](mailto:c.levine@comcast.net)). You can also order on [www.shopwithscrip.com](http://www.shopwithscrip.com) or via the RaiseRight mobile app. You will need our church's unique enrollment code to place an order electronically, so just reach out to me for that.

Scrip cards are available for over 750 retailers. We have offerings for gas stations, airlines, hotels and restaurants, if you're traveling this Fall. Target, Walmart or Amazon are always good cards to have on hand for last minute needs or gifts that just about everyone can use. Of course, grocery stores remain our most popular cards - Stop and Shop and Shop Rite are available every week in different denominations. The ways you can use Scrip gift cards are only limited by your imagination! And don't forget that every card you purchase – big or small – earns money for our church.

Thanks, as always, for your support!  
Casey

## CHURCH SCHOOL THIS FALL

As we are in something of a transitional period with the resuming of our in-person church school this fall, we're planning an activity each Sunday for children grades K through 8.

Adult leaders will be members of the Christian Ed. Committee. Church school families, come and join us!

Our search remains open for a new Director of Faith Formation with Children & Youth.

*Some children  
beginning Church School  
on September 12th.*



**OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

*We gather as a welcoming community in worship, learning, service and fellowship to embody Christ's message of love, compassion and justice. Joining faith with action, both within and beyond our church, we strive to build a community that serves all.*



*After three postponed dates due to COVID, a year and a half later, Bob & Mary Lee Dunn joyously announce the marriage of their daughter **Hillary to Patrick Quinn** on August 13 on Kent Island, Maryland.*

*Also announce, their daughter, Laura & her husband, Matt Gabso welcomed daughter **Laila Jane** born September 14 in O'Fallon IL. Matt is in the Air Force and currently stationed at Scott AFB in Illinois.*

**Our Deepest Sympathy**

*Our sympathies are extended to the family and friends of:*

**Bonnie Redford King,**  
*who passed away on August 18, 2021, daughter of Harrison & Donna Redford.*



**Southern New England Conference**  
United Church of Christ  
*Living the Love & Justice of Jesus*

**Super Saturday Registration is Now Open!**

**Register Early**

To register for Super Saturday please go to [sneucc.org](http://sneucc.org)



*With the uncertainty of Covid, the October Super Saturday will again be Virtual. Our priority is the safety of our attendees.*

Join us for Virtual Super Saturday on **October 2, 2021** featuring [Dr. Monica Coleman](#). Super Saturday is filled with a variety of virtual workshops, marketplace and networking.

This October, we will be offering some **1 Hour** workshops and a few **1 Hour Midday** workshops in addition to our standard 1.5 hours and extended workshops for attendees who want to be busy all day. Sign up for as many or as few as you like. View the [New Schedule](#).

Super Saturday is focusing on **renewal** on a personal and congregational level. Some of the workshops we are offering - **Assessing and Discerning Your Church's Future; Where Have We Been? What Have We Learned?; Become a Racial Justice Trainer; What's the Difference Between Charity, Advocacy and Social Justice?; Pray with Jesus; The Simplicity of Mindfulness; Pandemic Learnings, Reclaiming Commons** and many more.

**God is still speaking !!! , , , , , , , , , ,**

Visit our new website at  
[www.cantoncenterchurch.org](http://www.cantoncenterchurch.org)

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

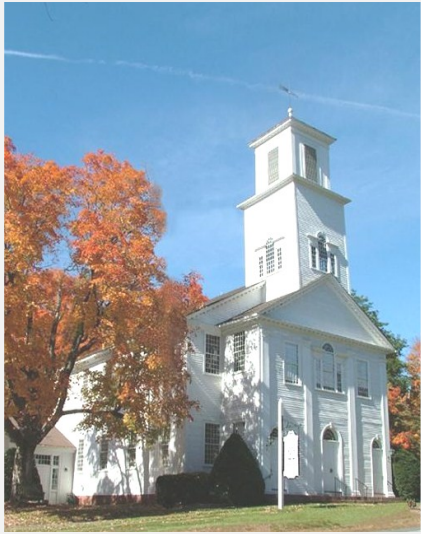
Follow us on

# OCTOBER 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2  AA 11:00 p.m.
3  <b>Worship &amp; Communion</b> 10:00 am <i>Confirmation Class</i> 11:30—12:15 pm	4  Sr. Choir 5 pm ACA 7:00 pm	5  AA 7:00 pm	6  <b>Deacons' Meeting Zoom</b> 7:00 pm	7  Handbell Choir	8	9  AA 11:00 p.m.
10 <b>Mission Meeting 9 am</b>  <b>Worship</b> 10:00 a.m.	11 <b>Trustee Meeting</b> 7:00 pm Sr. Choir 5 pm ACA 7:00 pm	12  AA 7:00 pm	13  <b>Council Meeting Zoom</b> 7:00 pm	14  Handbell Choir 7:00 pm	15	16  AA 11:00 p.m.
17  <b>Worship</b> 10:00 a.m. <b>Long Term Member Recognition</b> <i>Confirmation Class</i> 11:30—12:15 pm	18  <b>Music Meeting</b> 4:30 pm Sr. Choir 5 pm ACA 7:00 pm	19  <b>Fall Book Discussion</b> 7-8:30 pm via zoom AA 7:00 pm	20	21  Handbell Choir 7:00 pm	22	23  AA 11:00 p.m.
24  <b>Worship</b> 10:00 a.m. <b>New Members Join</b> <b>Fourth Sunday Food Collection</b>	25  Sr. Choir 5 pm ACA 7:00 pm	26  <b>Fall Book Discussion</b> 7-8:30 pm via zoom AA 7:00 pm	27	28  Handbell Choir 7:00 pm	29	30  AA 11:00 p.m.
31  <b>Worship</b> 10:00 a.m.						



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



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**184 Cherry Brook Road PO Box 133**  
**Canton Center, CT 06020-0133**

**Office**

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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

**Worship**  
**Sunday at 10:00 a.m.**

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*We're on the Web!*

*Visit us at:*

[www.cantoncenterchurch.org](http://www.cantoncenterchurch.org)

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