

THE CHURCHMOUSE

Newsletter of The First Congregational Church, Canton Center, CT

November 2021

From the Pastor

Rev. Brenda Pelc-Faszczka



ALL OUR OFFERINGS

A spirituality of work is based on a heightened sense of sacramentality, of the idea that everything that is, is holy and that our hands consecrate it to the service of God. When we grow radishes in a small container in a city apartment, we participate in creation. We sustain the globe. When we sweep the street in front of a house in the dirtiest city in the country, we bring new order to the universe. We tidy the Garden of Eden. We make God's world new again. When we repair what has been broken or paint what is old or give away what we have earned that is above and beyond our own sustenance, we stoop down and scoop up the earth and breathe into it new life again, as God did one morning in time only to watch it unfold and unfold and unfold through the ages.

Joan Chittister, *There is a Season*

It's been quite a while since we've passed the plate in church – more than a year and a half, since the start of the pandemic. We stopped passing anything, out of an abundance of caution about viruses and shared surfaces, as well as social distancing. Instead, we've had offering plates at the back of our sanctuary, inviting people who wanted to leave monetary offerings to do so on their way in or out of church. And within the service, instead of the traditional offertory while the plates were being passed, we've kept a Dedication of Offerings as part of our service, using it as a moment to thank God for all that we have to give and share – not just money, but everything – and to dedicate every means we have in life, inside and outside the church, to give of who we are in the ways of love, compassion and justice.

And a funny thing has happened. As we have considered within our Diaconate about when to resume the traditional pass-the-plate offertory practice, we started to wonder if the question wasn't "when to" but "whether to." It was noted that the way we are doing it now has allowed for an expanded notion of what counts as our offerings in life, and has reminded us that they are more than just monetary: offerings of love and faith are time, talent, presence, and care, as well as "treasure." They are what we do lovingly in the world and not just what we do in the church. They are the food for a food bank and the time we might spend working at one, the donated winter coats and the time we might spend delivering them. They are anything we give anywhere to any cause that is about love, compassion or justice. God's work through us is not limited in the forms it can take. We remember that better when we don't define "offerings" as monetary gifts alone.

It was also noted within our Diaconate discussion that passing the plate doesn't work well for people who mail in their financial offerings to the church (or process them electronically) and so aren't giving them at the services, or for people who may write out checks but forget to bring them on Sunday morning, or for anyone unprepared, for whatever reason, to make a monetary offering on a given day. And so in the spirit of growing in our understanding of offerings, we have decided to leave our current practice as is, unless there is some reason to make a change at some point, or for a particular service.

In this season of Thanksgiving and stewardship, when we may be particularly mindful of what we have to share, and the ways we have to share it, may we remember all our offerings in all their forms, be thankful that we can make them, and then make them gladly.

Faithfully,

Rev. Brenda

Musical Notes

Mary Lou Keefe, Director of Music



Special thanks to the eight members of the Senior Choir who are regularly attending rehearsals at our new time of 5:00 p.m. and who are committed to making a joyful noise and singing loud and proud at the Sunday services. Obviously we are not a big as we have been in the past but we are doing okay.

The eight members are as follows: Donna Hammond, Marilyn Larose, Tim LeGeyt, Kathleen Lundgren, Linda McAllister, Karen Needham, Kathy Pickrell, and Clare Workman, friend and fellow Gilbert graduate. Bill Thomas will be joining later in the year to sing a solo and sing with the choir on Dec. 12th and Christmas Eve.

The handbell choir is also persevering, albeit with smaller numbers and we plan to forge ahead and play in both November and December. In January the entire 5 octaves of bells will be whisked away to the Malmark factory in Penn. to be cleaned, tuned and whatever else they may need. We are also planning to purchase lights for each station and new tablecloths.

Special thanks to Hugh Anderson, Donna Hammond, Megan Keefe, Gina Magennis, Karen Needham, Kathy Pickrell, Cindy Webb, and our newest member, Allison Reder, friend of Megan.

Special thanks to the three members of the Music Committee: Donna, Karen, and Kathy

Special thanks also to Marilyn Larose for her very generous donation to the Music committee.

To anyone who has been a member of either choir in the near past is always welcome to return and will be welcomed with smiles and hoots and hollers.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

We extend our warmest welcome to those who joined our church on October 24.

Bruce Grigg, who lives in Canton, and is joining a church for the first time. His work is carpentry. Other interests include carving, guitar and reading.

Kathleen and Tim Lundgren, who live in Torrington. Kathleen is a special ed. paraeducator in Canton, and her interests include exercise, dance, cooking, music, theater, the arts, and travel. Tim is retired as an art teacher at Oliver Wolcott Tech. H.S. in Torrington, and his interests include oil painting, hiking, sailing, traveling, and walking his dog.

Carol Orlando, who lives in Canton with her husband Anthony (transitioning back to the area from Maryland). She has an accounting background, and retired a few years ago from the National Science Foundation, where she was an auditor and a cost analyst.

John Lester Raye, who lives in Canton with his wife Frances Trzcinski. He is a retired photographer, and also has an interest in history.

Kate St. Amand, who lives in Barkhamsted with her children, Hunter (11) and Declan (8). In addition to being a busy Mom, she is a dance choreographer.

WORSHIP MINISTRY



All Sunday services are held in-person and live streamed. For access to the live stream at 10 a.m. on Sundays, see our website, www.cantoncenterchurch.org.

Please note that recordings of services already past will be posted on the website (see "Connect with Us") as soon thereafter as possible. Viewing may not be accessible as soon as the same day after a Sunday morning service.

Nov. 7 Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost; Communion

Nov. 14 Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Nov. 21 Thanksgiving Sunday
Guest preacher will be the Rev. Robert LaRochelle

Nov. 28 First Sunday of Advent

A Note about Pandemic Protocols

At its meeting each month, our Church Council considers whether it is prudent to keep in place the pandemic-related protocols we are currently observing. The Council, at its mid-October meeting, was in consensus that we remain with our current practice for another month, until it is reviewed again: this means the request that everyone continue to wear masks while indoors at our church. As any changes are made, we will notify our congregation.

Please remember that the wearing of masks in a time of pandemic is to help protect those around us as much as it is to protect ourselves, so it is not a matter of simply what we ourselves, individually, may feel comfortable with regarding our own health. As we know, even the fully vaccinated can contract Covid-19, and while their vaccination may make it highly unlikely that they themselves would get very sick from it, that does not mean they couldn't still pass infection on to someone else whose resistance might be lower. Since none of us has any way of knowing the vaccination status of those who enter our church (we don't ask that information) or other health conditions that may affect any individual's particular vulnerability, it has been our Council's position to practice an abundance of caution and care toward those around us, when we are at church. This is consistent with our ethos as a church community.

November Missions & Outreach Collection

Non-perishable food items for *The Canton Food Bank*

Thanksgiving brown bags and a list of food suggestions will be handed out on Sunday, November 7.

Food items may be returned to the area under the stairs by the church office anytime **before or on Sunday, Nov. 21st.**

Please check the dates on what you donate to make sure items are not expired. Thank you for taking the time to share with others who are not as fortunate.

Furniture, Cleaning Supplies, Toiletries, Musical Items...

for *(IRIS) Integrated Refugee and Immigration Services*

Donations are being accepted in support of recently arrived refugees from Afghanistan. They are being brought to the New Haven and Hartford areas by IRIS and placed in apartments in the area to start a new life here.

To see a complete list of needs please see the link irisct.org. To arrange for a furniture pick up of dressers, dining tables and chairs, side tables, small sofas and carpets please send photos to mariesmovers@yahoo.com or contact Gina Magennis at g.magennis76@gmail.com to arrange next group pickup in our area. First pickup is scheduled for Nov. 2.

Grocery gift cards to Aldis, Stop & Shop and Shop Rite for *The Canton Social Services Dept.*

They will be putting together boxes for some Canton families, similar to what they did last year.

If you wish to purchase gift cards through our Scrip program please contact Casey Levine at 860-371-1016 or c.levine@comcast.net. Aldi is not available through Scrip.

Please indicate that the gift card/s are for the Thanksgiving boxes and have them in to the church office **by Thursday, November 11th.**

Deacon's Bench

Tim LeGeyt



Giving Thanks in November

I like November because it is the time to focus on giving thanks - not that we shouldn't focus on giving thanks all year, but November brings the need and desire to give thanks into the present time with our Thanksgiving holiday.

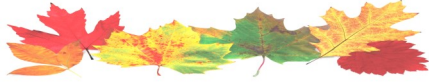
One of the blessings that we give thanks for are our relationships - those two-way associations with family, friends and our church community. We believe that God is the source of all our relationships. God is the spirit that undergirds and invigorates our relationships. God guides us into relationships and motivates us to engage each day with others to give some thought and care.

When we gather together to worship, God guides us to focus on the relationships that we have with people in our Church, other family members and friends. Through our worship, we feel the urge to appreciate those connections and to give thanks for them. This experience can ground us as Christians.

I give thanks at other times of the year, too, but in November it 'breaks forth' into my thought process and I feel the joy and blessing that relationships produce.

Is it like that for you? If so, Happy Thanksgiving!!!

THE PERFECT TIME TO SCRIP!



November is here! This time of year always flies by for me. The days are suddenly much shorter, which generally means I want to stay inside more and sleep longer. It also means that Christmas will be here before we know it!

Christmas seems to be getting even an earlier push than normal this year due to the “supply chain shortage”. Don’t worry that you’ll be shut out of getting that perfect gift if you haven’t started shopping yet. Gift Cards through Scrip are always here for you! And starting Sunday, 11/7, we’ll get back to having a table set up in the parish hall right after church, whether or not we’re having coffee hour. If you’re not in church, don’t worry about that either. You can always call or email me (860-693-0134 or c.levine@comcast.net) or you can place an order online or through the RaiseRight app. Reach out to me for our church’s unique enrollment code if you wish to place an order electronically.

Scrip cards are available for over 750 retailers – from large chain stores and restaurants to smaller national shops, and lots of online retailers. We even have Visa cards available in various denominations – with no activation fee that you would pay if you bought them in the store. Of course, grocery stores remain our most popular cards - Stop & 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

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.

Trustees News

Dave Heyer

The Parsonage at 172 Cherry Brook Road has been an integral part of the Church since it was donated to the Church some 50 years ago in the will of Mr. Byron Case. Originally intended as a residence for the Church’s minister, our ministers have often elected to have their own residences. Larry Smith’s and Rushan Sinnaduray’s families have been recent parsonage residents; the remainder of the time it has been rented. A little-known fact is the Jim Todd was a parsonage resident, as well as Carol Fisher’s daughter Kate’s family. Diane Arias and her three children now reside there.

The Church has invested in the parsonage only sporadically, in particular to prepare it for a new occupant, while never significantly addressing the limitations of its underlying physical condition. It has antiquated electrical service, poor and inadequate electrical wiring, and insufficient insulation, especially considering the house’s ample size (nearly 3000 square feet). These factors make it challenging to heat, and the result is that rental income is less than it would be were these items corrected.

Fortunately, investing in basic electrical and insulation improvements is probably a cost-effective strategy that will improve the underlying value of the house as well as its rentability. We are pursuing these investment opportunities and expect to inform the Congregation about them early next year.

I will try to provide more details about Mr. Byron Case in the next issue.

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.

An Open and Affirming Congregation

Congratulations

to our long term members of

25 years:

Julia Downey

Scott Munson

John Rohlfing

Kathy Todd

30 years:

Betsy Ash

Phil Doyle

Mary Lee Dunn

Peter & Solveig Hayward

Pat Juhl

Alice Lund

Karen Needham

Peggy Steinway

Julius & Anne Ziemba

40 years:

Herbert Bossardt

Ken & Barbara Jo Eifes

Linnell Munson

50 years:

Kathy Pickrell

Bev Sealand

60 years:

Larry & Elenor Smith

65 years:

Charles Richardson



NOTICE OF A SPECIAL MEETING of the First Congregational Church, Canton Center, CT, on Sunday, Nov. 14, 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 14
4. Any other business proper to come before the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Bev Sealand, Clerk

COME HIKE WITH US!



Sunday, November 7th after church.

We invite you on a family hike on the Mary Conklin trail up on Indian Hill, just a few minutes from the church. The trail does not have a lot of elevation and we will walk about two miles, noticing the beauty of the woods this time of year.

Wear sturdy shoes, dress in layers and bring a hat and water. We will meet after church and carpool to the parking area off Indian Hill Road. Call Hollace Bristol with questions (928) 853-0311 or email hlbristol@msn.com.

Depending on the participation we may make hiking a regular church activity.

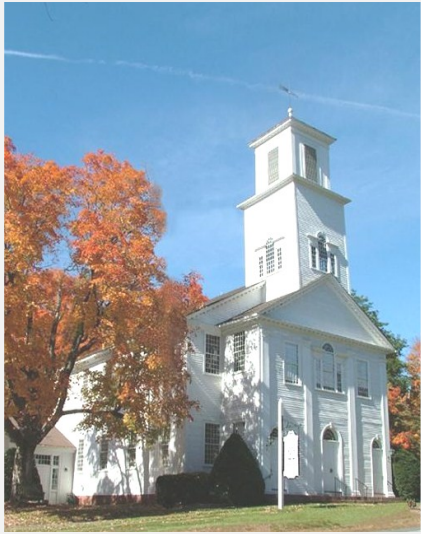
Rain date: Sun., Nov. 14.

NOVEMBER 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Sr. Choir 5 pm ACA 7:00 pm	2 AA 7:00 pm	3 Deacons' Meeting Zoom 7:00 pm	4 Handbell Choir 7:00 pm	5	6 AA 11:00 p.m.
7 Worship & Communion 10:00 am Hike –Indian Hill	8 Trustee Meeting 7:00 pm Sr. Choir 5 pm ACA 7:00 pm	9 Council Meeting Zoom 7:00 pm AA 7:00 pm	10	11 Handbell Choir 7:00 pm	12	13 AA 11:00 p.m.
14 Missions 9:00 am Worship 10:00 a.m. CONGREGATIONAL MEETING 11:00 AM <i>Confirmation Class 11:30—12:15 pm</i>	15 Music Meeting 4:30 pm Sr. Choir 5 pm ACA 7:00 pm	16 AA 7:00 pm	17	18 Handbell Choir 7:00 pm	19	20 AA 11:00 p.m.
21 Worship 10:00 a.m. Wreath Pick Up	22 Sr. Choir 5 pm ACA 7:00 pm	23 AA 7:00 pm	24	25 	26	27 AA 11:00 p.m.
28 Worship 10:00 a.m. Fourth Sunday Food Collection	29 Sr. Choir 5 pm ACA 7:00 pm	30 AA 7:00 pm				



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(United Church of Christ)
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Pastor

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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.

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.cantoncenterchurch.org
