

THE CHURCHMOUSE

Newsletter of The First Congregational Church, Canton Center, CT

July/August 2022

From the Pastor

Rev. Dr. Brenda Pelc-Faszczka



What I always hope the summer will allow me, I also hope it allows you: a more restful pace, a less pressured feel to the days and the weeks, a different sense of time. *Sabbath*, in the Biblical vision, rest and renewal. Because even when we're doing what we love, the pace at which we may need to do it can be tiring, even depleting, and leave us feeling not exactly patient -- with ourselves, with others, with life.

The great New England poet and writer Ralph Waldo Emerson reminds us that it would be good if we could adopt nature's own pace, which is an exquisitely patient one. It strikes me that nature can be patient because she knows innately and beyond argument that the next season will follow when it's supposed to, that things unfold according to their created wisdom, that the trees will bud when it's time to bud and bear fruit when it's time to bear fruit, and no amount of stressing would change that. Trust in the process is built-in. Patience with it is natural.

Not so for humans. Patience, for us, is a choice: a deliberate choosing of an expansive way of living and seeing and being that depends on a deeply held reverence for the whole process of life. So much in our modern world can pull us away from that, both in its content and its pace. As we consume so much information and sensory input every day, maybe the last thing it leaves us feeling is patient. Or reverent. Or trusting. Or renewed as God's beloved.

So maybe in the midst of all that we are appropriately engaged with and concerned about all the time, we can nevertheless let summer do what summer does... slow us down, gentle us down into an unclenched space, make us more patient. Even if it's only for that one week that we're at the shore, or those few days that we're camping in the woods, or whatever other encounters with the natural world it might bring us. If we're fortunate enough to have them, let's savor them: they have something to teach us.

Faithfully,

Rev. Brenda

WORSHIP MINISTRY

Deacon's Bench

Ali Hager

We're in the quiet, slow time of summer of New England. I wonder how you are filling these long, warm days. Even if Sunday worship isn't part of your summer, what are the ways you stay connected to God, to one another, and to our church community?

This summer I am readying myself to begin classes at Yale Divinity School at the end of August. One unexpected requirement of my course work this fall is that I will begin an internship in Supervised Ministry in a church setting. This work also satisfies a requirement in my path towards ordained ministry in the UCC. I will begin work September 1st at Asylum Hill Congregational Church in Hartford. While I am serving at AHCC, I will be a part of their Sunday worship each week, which means I need to step away from my role as a Deacon in our church. I truly love serving as a Deacon – it's a role that brings me a lot of joy, and a feeling of connection to our congregation. And I also recognize it's time for me to step into additional roles, and serve congregations that are not my own.

I will surely keep you updated throughout this process. I will continue to check in with the Diaconate, as they walk with me through my time as a Member in Discernment in the UCC. And on the rare Sunday I may have "off," you'll surely find me in the pews.

Before September comes, I'm hoping to find some moments of stillness and quiet, a slowing of the fast-paced speed of things. I hope you'll join me in finding what you most need in this season.

The Task of Healthy Religion

The task of healthy religion is to communicate to you your inherent dignity and the dignity inherent in everything else too. If you do not discover that deep inherent meaning, then everything else will finally disappoint you, driving your obsession with more....

As a Divine creation, you have an intrinsic meaning, an irreplaceable worth. Once you can fully accept that inherent dignity in yourself, your happiness is henceforth an inside job, and you will naturally hand it on to others too, because the Source is now infinite and you are finally connected to your Source.

- Richard Rohr

WORSHIP MINISTRY

WORSHIP IN JULY

Services at 10 a.m. Masks optional.

Joining us for the month of July will be the congregation of the Canton Community Baptist Church.

July 3	Fourth Sunday after Pentecost; Communion
July 10	Fifth Sunday after Pentecost Guest pastor: The Rev. Dr. Robert LaRochelle
July 17	Sixth Sunday after Pentecost Guest pastor: The Rev. Dr. Robert LaRochelle
July 24	Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
July 31	Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

Regular services resume at Canton Center Church on Sept. 4.

Worship in August

Services at 10 a.m. at The Canton Community Baptist Church, 125 Dowd Ave., Canton. Masks optional.

Those who wish to participate in the August services online rather than in person (via Zoom) may get the Zoom link from the church's website, www.CantonCommunityBaptist.com.

To get the bulletin online, go to the CCBC Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/111441395567215>

STAFF VACATION DATES

Rev. Brenda will be on vacation July 4-18 and August 1-15.

The church office and Deacons will have information on emergency pastoral coverage during those periods.

Music Notes

Mary Lou Keefe, Director of Music

WORSHIP MINISTRY

Another school year has ended and well deserved vacations are in order. With that comes time off for members of the senior and bell choirs who deserve this time. Thank you to all of you for your participation and loyalty during the past year and your contribution of the gift of music.

The following are the members of the senior choirs for the past year as well as guest singers.

Jerry Alonzy, Art Dewey, Donna Hammond, Megan Keefe-guest, Dan LeGeyt-guest, Tim LeGeyt, Kathleen Lundgren, Marilyn Larose, Linda McAllister, Gina Magennis, Karen(Kim) Needham, Kathy Pickrell, Judy Robinson, Paul Stansel, Jim Todd, and Clare Workman-guest who has become a member.

We are sincerely hoping that those members who were unable to participate this past year will be able to rejoin in the near future.

The following are members and guests of the bell choir an order of appearance l-r

Karen Needham, Gina Magennis, Cindy Webb, Allison Potter, Hugh Anderson, Kathy Pickrell, Donna Hammond, Martha Stansel, Allison Reder, and Megan Keefe and guests for May 22nd, special service, Judy Robinson and Janelle who I hope will return in the fall.

Special thanks to the music committee:

Karen Needham who finished her term as chair for two years in May and who always attended the zoom meetings

Kathy Pickrell and Donna Hammond co chairs; who will share the activities of attending zoom.

Kathleen Lundgren --welcome aboard, our newest member:

Guest singers this summer are:

Judy Robinson-June 19th	Paul Stansel, July 10th
Jim Todd, July 3rd	Bill Thomas-July 31st

Thank you to all for a great year and see you in the fall.



It's not too late to sign up for that special feat!! New members are always welcome to either choir.

Start -up date for **Senior Choir** is August 29th at the newish time 5:00 pm,
Start up date for the **Bell Choir** is Sept. 15th at the new time 5:30 pm.

Trustees News

Phil LeGeyt, Chairperson

Happy summer to everyone.

Your Board of Trustees wants to wish you a very healthy and happy summer.

The trustees meet in person every month throughout the year to keep up with our duties and responsibilities to our church.

The parish hall is scheduled to be painted in August.

We are looking at other projects inside and outside our old but beautiful buildings.



THANK YOU TO OUR LIVE STREAM TEAM!!

If we worship with our church mostly in person, we may forget how important it is to others, who can't be there in person, to be able to see our services online, including both regular Sunday services and special ones like Maundy Thursday and Christmas Eve. Like many churches, before the pandemic we were not equipped to do this but quickly became a live streaming church when we needed to, first depending on the talents of Jerry Alonzy and then installing equipment that allows a variety of volunteers to do our camera-operating each week. *We are so grateful to those who take care of this ministry!*

Casey Levine, one of our Senior Deacons, who coordinates the volunteer scheduling and makes sure we have coverage for every service.

Craig McAllister, Kristin Oswald, Noah Herbek, Steve Byko, Evan Rees, Hugh Anderson, camera operators

FAITH FORMATION MINISTRY

Faith Formation Staffing Update: Position Filled!

We are excited to announce that at the proposal of the Christian Education Committee, and with the unanimous endorsement of the Church Council, Hollace Bristol and Karen Needham will be stepping into our Faith Formation staff position beginning Sept. 1. With Hollace as Director of Faith Formation and Karen as Assistant Director, they will share the responsibilities of leading and guiding our church school and youth ministries, supported by the CE Committee.

Hollace Bristol
Faith Formation



I was baptized in this church as a baby. Rev. Alvin Beachy gave my parents a letter addressed to me to be opened on my 12th birthday. I attended Sunday School regularly and don't remember who my teacher was but remember receiving pins at the end of each year for attendance. Those pins were important to me, and I keep them in my jewelry box. I remember having to get dressed up for church and on Easter having to wear white gloves and a bonnet.

The sanctuary was dark and Gothic and a bit imposing. But I don't remember ever hearing a message from the pulpit that projected fear or heavy dogma. I think the most deliberate instruction came at the front door. Elmer Blackman welcomed everyone with a handshake. And, even as a child, if you didn't return a hearty sincere handshake in return, he asked you to repeat it until you passed his test of firmness and solid connection.

Canton Center Church itself was as dependable as Elmer Blackman and represented a solid connection to extended family, music, inclusive community, and faith. We rarely missed a Sunday; other activities didn't compete for Sunday morning time. We took church for granted in a way; it was always there; doors were always open; needs were met with love.

My childhood would have been a diminished experience without Church. It provided a mirror for growing children that always reflected respect, love, and our best-dressed selves in our patent leather shoes, celebrated, and included. I can't imagine my childhood without it.

Church School at Canton Center Church is still that foundational, honoring, loving experience. It is our intent that each child's reflection here is one of light, honor, love, and celebration. We hope your children will join us this coming program year which starts on Gathering Sunday, September 11th, 2022.

Wishing you a blessed summer!

Delegates' Report of the Third Annual Meeting, Southern New England Conference of the UCC

Anne Ziembra and Grant Hagedorn

Grant Hagedorn and I attended the meeting on June 18, 2022. It was a virtual meeting, out of concerns for health safety, but it was obvious that much care and planning had gone into this gathering I was disappointed that we were unable to view the other participants, but on the positive side there was safety, lack of travel, and the convenience of viewing on computer, which Grant pointed out to me in our discussion after the meeting

Grant missed the energy these events usually gather and feels that virtual conferences, meetings and even services are here to stay, not to replace but to supplement in person events.

The meeting commenced with a few words from the moderator of the SNEUCC board Persephone Hall, who truly gave us a warm welcome and set the tone for what was to follow.

The theme of the meeting was “A Sure Foundation” based on Mathew 7:24-27, the parable of a person hearing and following Jesus's words as being like a wise builder building a foundation on solid ground instead of sand. This theme ties in with the conference still being in the foundation stages (in its third year) and also in the importance of attempting to align the mission of the conference with the teachings of Jesus.

Grant felt that there were many highlights throughout the day and while it is not good to see the problems that exist for Churches currently, it is good to realize that our churches’ struggles are not unique. The conference budget was discussed and yes, they to struggle to make it work, with discussion of investment and endowments playing out there as well.

I found the music of the worship service to be perfectly chosen, with the music continuing the themes of Foundation, safe ground and following God's will. Other music following the service was beautiful and diverse, like the churches in our conference.

*The poem *Flipping Houses* was read by the author, Rev. Maren Tirabassi. In her imagery of a foundation, stones were gathered by many hands working together. The poem was based on the conference theme and the actual reading of Mathew 7:24-27 was the First Nations Version, following a Time of Confession which touched on Land Acknowledgement and Colonialism.*

The keynote speaker, Rev. Dr. Patrick Duggan, was dynamic and inspiring. He is the Executive Director of the UCC Church Building and Loan Fund, which helps churches expand their sense of mission using their assets, which is usually church buildings. The challenge is to find what it is that the community around the church is lacking and find a way to fill this need. I found myself wondering how we might use our own assets, as a place to provide food, or housing, to use our green land and river space in new ways, for youth programs, yoga in the hall, art gallery in the small building. What could enable us to continue worshipping and raise funds to thrive?

I visited the workshop run by Dr. Duggan, as well as the Faith Formation workshop. If you go to the SNEUCC site you will find Faith Formation resources. The training is now on-line, and includes a certificate course (SNEUCC Faith Formation (& Youth Leader) Leadership Training Program). The workshop leaders stressed that we need to strongly consider the needs and stresses of young families with children for a successful program. Grant and I both felt this was important when we discussed our impressions of the meeting.

Grant attended a breakout session titled, Approaches to Church Governance. Many churches are finding fewer members doing more of the work, and he came away with some thoughts on how perhaps our church can increase involvement among our congregation.

I found much of the conference meeting to be inspiring and feel that the SNEUCC conference has resources which could prove useful. I am looking forward to next year and being able to meet in person at Bryant University in Rhode Island.

Save the date - SNEUCC 4th Annual Meeting on Saturday, June 10th at Bryant University in Smithfield, RI

Scrip Your Summer

Happy Summer!

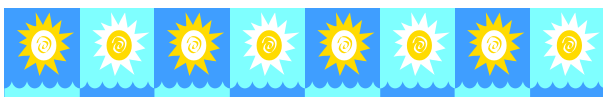
The Scrip table will be open during coffee hour all through the month of July, as usual.

If you'd like to make a purchase in August, I'm just a phone call or an email away. Of course, you can always call or email me any time of year to place an order (860-693-0134 or c.levine@comcast.net). You can also order on www.raiseright.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. I'm happy to deliver cards to your home or you can come to me.

Scrip gift cards are perfect for Summer travel or staycations. We have offerings for gas stations, airlines, hotels and restaurants all over the country. If you're staying close, think about Target, Walmart or Amazon as good cards to have on hand for last minute needs. Of course, grocery stores remain our most popular cards. Stop and Shop and ShopRite are our local ones, but we also have Safeway, Giant Eagle, Albertson's and Tops... just to name a few that you might if you are traveling out of state. Just about anywhere you might go around the country, we have Scrip cards you can use while you are there. 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.

Have a wonderful Summer and thanks for your support!

Casey



MISSIONS & OUTREACH



SCHOOL SUPPLY & BACKPACK COLLECTION

We will be collecting backpacks and school supplies for the month of July to give to Wellmore Behavioral Health that serves families in need.

You can place these items in the missions box in the vestibule:

backpacks, notebooks, pencils, pens, highlighters, erasers, elastic book covers, assignment notebooks, rulers, sticky notes and items of the genre and “nutritious snacks” such as granola bars, dried fruits, etc.

Thank you! All of this should energize children of the area prompting a great start to a new school year!



*Thank you to
Skip and Nancy Alford
for tending to the plantings
and urns in front of our church.*

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 & Affirming Congregation



*Congratulations to
Wyatt Preston Neumann,
child of Roy & Krystle Neumann,
who was baptized on
June 12, 2022
at Canton Center Church.*



God is still speaking !!!

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Visit our website at
www.cantoncenterchurch.org

Listen to recorded
Sermons and Music
from worship services!

Follow us on 

You did it!
Congratulations

Congratulations to those who recently graduated

Evan Rees,

son of Andy and Vicki Rees, graduated from the Watkinson School on June 10, having received an Athlete of the Year Award and the Timothy W. Goodrich II Award for outstanding contribution to the life and spirit of the school, through the qualities of character and leadership.


Henry Engvall,

son of Mary Engvall, has graduated from Northeastern University with a degree in mechanical engineering. He is living in Boston and working for Boston Scientific.

Julia DiMattia,

daughter of Kristen DiMattia, graduated with honors from Central Connecticut State University with a degree in marketing and living in Florida.

JULY 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 AA 11:00 p.m.
3 Worship & Communion 10:00 am	4  ACA 7:00 pm	5 AA 7:00 pm	6	7	8	9 AA 11:00 p.m.
10 Worship 10:00 am	11 Trustees 7 pm ACA 7:00 pm	12 AA 7:00 pm	13	14	15	16 AA 11:00 p.m.
17 Worship 10:00 am	18 ACA 7:00 pm	19 AA 7:00 pm	20	21	22	23 Memorial 11:00 am AA 11:00 p.m.
24 Worship 10:00 am	25 ACA 7:00 pm	26 AA 7:00 pm	27	28	29	30 AA 11:00 p.m.
31 Worship 10:00 am						

AUGUST 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 ACA 7:00 pm	2 AA 7:00 pm	3	4	5	6 AA 11:00 p.m.
7 Worship 10:00 am at Canton Community Baptist Church	8 Trustees 7:00 pm ACA 7:00 pm	9 AA 7:00 pm	10	11	12	13 AA 11:00 p.m.
14 Worship 10:00 am at Canton Community Baptist Church	15 ACA 7:00 pm	16 AA 7:00 pm	17	18 Council Zoom 7:00 pm	19	20 AA 11:00 p.m.
21 Worship 10:00 am at Canton Community Baptist Church	22 ACA 7:00 pm	23 AA 7:00 pm	24 Deacons Zoom 7:00 pm	25	26	27 AA 11:00 p.m.
28 Worship 10:00 am at Canton Community Baptist Church	29 Sr. Choir 5:00 pm ACA 7:00 pm	30 AA 7:00 pm	31			



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Organist/Director of Music:

(860)693-4216

Mary Lou Keefe
music@cantoncenterchurch.org

Worship every Sunday
at 10:00 a.m.

We are on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.cantoncenterchurch.org
