

THE CHURCHMOUSE

Newsletter of The First Congregational Church, Canton Center, CT

September 2022

From the Pastor

Rev. Brenda Pelc-Faszczka

The Everywhere God

The sixteenth question in the old Baltimore Catechism was "Where is God?" and it was answered straightforwardly: "God is everywhere." The pinnacle of prayer is reached when we can trust that we are constantly in the presence of God. We cannot not be in the presence of God! Where would we go? As the psalmist reflects, if we go up to the heavens or underneath the earth, we still can't get away from God (see Psalm 139:7-10). God is either in all things, or God is in nothing.



-Richard Rohr

I like this way of thinking about God. It reminds us that we are not so much searching for specific times or places or experiences where God can be found but rather are trying to develop our own consciousness to the point where we know God is in every time, place and experience. And then we see everything accordingly.

As someone else has put it, there is no such thing as sacred places and profane places. There are only sacred places and desecrated places – that is, those whose inherent sacredness we have ignored, forgotten, neglected, or violated. God is not somehow absent from anything just because our own perception of that thing may be lacking.

As we gather again this September to begin a new church year, I hope we'll come to it with gratitude for whatever awareness of the holy our summers have given us and with every readiness to see God everywhere, to know God in everything, as we continue together.

Faithfully,

Rev. Brenda

WORSHIP MINISTRY

SEPTEMBER WORSHIP

All Sunday services at 10:00 a.m., in person and live streamed. Current policy is mask-optional.

To watch a service live, go to the church website and click on the icon on the homepage.

To view a service later, see under “Connect with Us” on our website (Sunday services usually posted there on Mondays), or go to YouTube.com and search “Canton Center Church” (Sunday a.m. service usually available there by Sunday afternoon).

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| Sept. 4 | Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost; Communion |
| Sept. 11 | GATHERING SUNDAY
<i>Opening of a new church year.
Intergenerational participation in worship, church school begins.
Pizza lunch following the service.</i> |
| Sept. 18 | Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost |
| Sept 25 | Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost
<i>“Why Church?” The message will be offered by several church members, reflecting on why church continues to matter.</i> |

Deacons' Bench

Kristin Oswald, Deacon

Perhaps you have wondered what the Deacons are doing with clip board in hand at the back of the church during Sunday services. What began as protocol during the COVID-19 pandemic has continued in a looser form over the past 6 months or so to help with tracking attendance. During the pandemic, it was suggested per UCC guidelines that we keep track of all persons coming to in-person church services in case we had to reach out for contact tracing purposes if the church was notified of a positive COVID case. Now, we use this check-off list of church service attendees as a way to note who is coming to in-person services to help keep count of attendance for our records. The Diaconate uses this information when we complete our “Rolls Review” task, which is an accounting of who should be considered an “active” church member.

This measure is just one way to determine what our official membership count is each year. Financial support is another way. At any given time, our church family may also include the involvement of those who have not officially joined the church and are not recorded as members but who, as “friends of the church,” may be attending, contributing, and/or volunteering.

We welcome all kinds of contributions to keep our church alive – presence at church services and events, participation on a church committee or in a church activity, telling others about the benefits of church membership and/or helping the church financially. Our Deacons’ service attendance checklist is just one way to show that we note and appreciate your presence and that you count!

Christian Education News

Hollace Bristol, Director of Faith Formation

Karen Needham and I are so excited about the possibilities ahead of us as we begin the program year. We will continue offering Church School in the experiential model, wherein the teachings of Christ are embodied in the activities in which your children participate.

Last year we wove the theme of “You are the light of the world” throughout the school year. This year we will work with the theme of gratitude, developing our awareness of our blessings, the magic in all that surrounds us and the miraculous beings that we are.

We hope you will join us on Gathering Sunday for our Intergenerational Service and our orientation to Church School. We are hosting a pizza luncheon after the service and invite you to bring a side dish or dessert to share.

We are also hoping that there are a few of you who will participate in the Faith Formation Ministry with Karen and I this year, either as a volunteer to help with Church School, or as a member of the Christian Education Committee. You can contact me at hlbristol@msn.com or 928-853-0311. We look forward to working with you!

WELCOME HOME!

GATHERING SUNDAY
Intergenerational Service
& Beginning of Church School
September 11, 2022 at 10:00a.m.

Come join us as we open a new church year together
and celebrate our faith community!

Pizza lunch ~ Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.



The First Congregational Church
184 Cherry Brook Road, Canton Center, CT 06020-0133
Office: 860-693-4581 Website: CantonCenterChurch.org

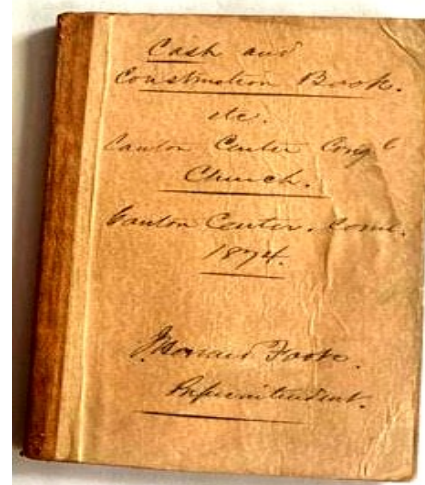
A Hardworking Church Superintendent

Our church has been served by several non-pastor, dedicated members over the years. One of them is J. Howard Foote, who lived up Rte 179 on "Foote's Hill", right across the street from the "Belair Hotel", in a colonial which is still there (the Hotel is not there, but the impressive stone wall with gates that framed the Hotel is there).

J. Howard Foote was somewhat well-to-do, having made his money as a music store owner in New York City. J. Howard built the Belair Hotel and used it for his summer home when he wasn't in the city. His father, Deacon Lancel Foote, made plenty of photographs of Canton Center as well, some of which ended up on postcards for community friends to use and mail to family and friends.

Our church was remodeled in the Gothic style (see the picture) in the 1870's in significant ways and for significant cost. J. Howard Foote was the Superintendent for the project and kept the accounts of the Building Fund and the Cash and Construction in separate booklets (see the picture). The total cost of the remodeling was \$3384 and the church members were canvassed for contributions of \$10.00 a share. The booklets shown here in pictures, prepared by J. Howard Foote, show the itemization and accrual of those shares as well as the payments to the various persons and businesses which provided the work and the materials for the Gothic remodeling.

A significant change to the Meeting House and one that lasted for 94 years.



"Our Church Gardens"

This summer we have been battling mildew and thirsty crows pecking apart out tomatoes, but somehow our little garden beds have been producing plenty of veggies for the Canton Food Bank!

It always feels good to walk in there with a basket of our veggies.

Bruce Griggs wins the prize for the most cucumbers this year - sometimes 20 or 30 pounds worth from his plot.



Thanks to Bruce Griggs and Anne Ziemba for volunteering this summer.

Art Mauger

Welcome Back to Fundraising While You Shop!

We hope everyone had a wonderful summer. Church and school are back in session and so is scrip! Beginning September 4th, you'll find the scrip table open in the Parish Hall every Sunday during coffee hour. Stop by to see what gift cards we have available for immediate purchase, for ordering to pick up the following week, or to just find out more about our program.

If you don't know about scrip yet, I'm not doing my job very well! It's a fundraising program our church been participating in for over 6 years! Church members can purchase gift cards for over 700 retailers. You pay face value, but the church buys them for less, thus the fundraising! Every time you buy a card through us, you're raising money for our church! You can order in person, online or through the RaiseRight app.

In order to continue and grow on our success, we need more shoppers! You don't have to make a purchase every week, or even every month. Give it a try if you haven't yet – every single purchase helps! While most people think of buying gift cards for presents, you can also just buy them for yourself to use in place of cash or credit at local grocery stores, restaurants and department stores. If you're spending the money anyway, why not help our church in the process? We'd also love to have more people to help run the table during coffee hour. Even if you can only commit to once a month or less it would help a lot. See Casey or Karen if you can lend a hand.

We're looking forward to seeing everyone soon! Keep scripping!

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 Church

COMING LATER THIS FALL

STAGES OF FAITH:

A small-group discussion opportunity

Some fascinating work has been done on the idea that there are distinctly identifiable stages of spiritual evolution in human beings, with different things mattering to people in different stages of growth.

Reflecting on these ideas can help us understand why things that matter greatly to us may matter less so to others.

It can also help us get some perspective on why there are such differing ideas of God within Scripture: it turns out that there are different stages of faith reflected in its writings.

Rev. Brenda will propose some dates and make reading material available.



Our Deepest Sympathy

Our sympathies are extended to the families and friends of:

Eleanor Thomas,
who passed away on June 30, 2022.



SUNDAY FLOWERS

I hope everyone is enjoying a wonderful summer! As we look forward to our fall and winter months (2022 - 2023), I see that there are a few Sunday openings for flower contributions. They are as follows:

<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
September 4, 11 and 18	January 15
October 23	April 2, 23 and 30
November 13 and 27	June 4
	July 2, 23 and 30



Please look over the list and choose a Sunday that has a special meaning for you, and contact me (860.693.2863 or nanalford@snet.net) with your choice. All flower contributors will receive a reminder call or email a week before.

Again, a special "thank you" to all those who continue to contribute flowers every year - it is so appreciated by our congregation and adds a special dimension to our services. It doesn't happen without your help!

Nancy Alford

SEPTEMBER 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 AA 11:00 p.m.
4 Worship & Communion 10:00 am	5 ACA 7:00 pm Al-Anon 7:00 pm	6 AA 7:00 pm	7 Diaconate 7:00 pm	8	9	10 AA 11:00 p.m.
11 Missions 9 a.m. Worship 10:00 am "Gathering Sunday"	12 Music 4:30 pm Choir 5:00 pm Trustees 7:00 pm ACA 7:00 pm Al-Anon 7:00 pm	13 AA 7:00 pm	14 Council 7:00 pm	15 Bell Choir 5:30 pm	16	17 Bristol Annual Family Meeting 11- 4 p.m. AA 11:00 p.m.
18 Worship 10:00 am	19 Choir 5:00 pm ACA 7:00 pm Al-Anon 7:00 pm	20 AA 7:00 pm	21	22 Bell Choir 5:30 pm	23	24 AA 11:00 p.m.
25 Worship 10:00 am Fourth Sunday Food Collection	26 Garden Club set up 8-3 pm Choir 5:00 pm ACA 7:00 pm Al-Anon 7:00 pm	27 Garden Club Luncheon 8-3 pm AA 7:00 pm	28	29 Bell Choir 5:30 pm	30	



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



Worship every Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

The First Congregational Church
184 Cherry Brook Road, PO Box 133
Canton Center, CT 06020-0133

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