



# THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH CANTON CENTER, CT

September 25, 2022 ~ 10:00 a.m.

Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost



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~ ORDER OF WORSHIP ~

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*\*Please stand if able.*

*Bold denotes unison response.*

**CHIMES**

Karen Needham

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Brief announcements from the congregation are welcome. Those wishing to make an announcement are asked to be in the front pews at the start of the announcement period. **Prayer request cards** may be found on the tables at the back of the church. **Offerings** may be placed in the marked boxes on the tables at the back or front of the church.*

**PRELUDE**    *Set Your Hearts on the Higher Gifts*

Steven Warner

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Friends, we gather once more as a community of faith,  
**to remember the stories and bonds that call us.**

We've come to remember what it means to love God,  
**with heart and soul, with mind and strength.**

We've come to keep our eyes on Jesus,  
**who teaches us the way of love, compassion, service.**

May this day's graces awaken us and deepen our knowing  
**that in everything, we are the people of God.**

**\*HYMN**    *God Is Here!*    Chalice (blue), 280

*God is here! As we your people meet to offer praise and prayer,  
May we find in fuller measure what it is in Christ we share.  
Here, as in the world around us, all our varied skills and arts  
Wait the coming of the Spirit into open minds and hearts.*

*Here are symbols to remind us of our lifelong need of grace;  
Here are table, fount and pulpit; here the cross has central place.  
Here in honesty of preaching, here in silence as in speech,  
Here, in newness and renewal, God the Spirit comes to each.*

*Here our children find a welcome in the Shepherd's flock and fold;  
Here as bread and wine are taken, Christ sustains us as of old.  
Here the servants of the Servant seek in worship to explore  
What it means in daily living to believe and to adore.*

*Lord of all, of church and kingdom, in an age of change and doubt  
Keep us faithful to the gospel, help us work your purpose out.  
Here, in this day's dedication, all we have to give, receive,  
We, who cannot live without you, we adore you! We believe!*

**\*GATHERING PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER**

God of love, we give thanks that you call us into community,  
to share life in its blessing and challenge,  
to share faith in its guidance and gifts,  
to be the church together.

May the eyes of our hearts be awake today  
to perceive the wisdom of Christ,  
who bids us come and follow.

In his name and spirit we pray, as we also say together:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts  
as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power  
and the glory forever. Amen.

**\*SUNG RESPONSE** *Bless God, O My Soul*

The image shows two staves of musical notation for a sung response. The first staff has a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 2/2 time signature. The melody is written on the upper line, and the lyrics are written below it. The second staff continues the melody and lyrics. The lyrics are: "Bless God, O my soul! All with - in me bless God's name! Bless God, who was, and is, and shall ev - er be the same!"

**ANTHEM** *Lord, I Stretch My Hands to You* Jay Althouse  
Senior Choir

**FOURTH SUNDAY FOOD COLLECTION** Hollace Bristol & Karen Needham

*Following this, children may go out to church school.*

**READING FROM SCRIPTURE** Philippians 4:4-9 Pew Bible, p. 955

**MESSAGE** *Why Church?* Vicki Rees, Chris Hager

## DEDICATION OF OFFERINGS

God of every goodness,  
may your spirit bless all the offerings we make,  
in every form they take,  
that we might be the hands and feet of Christ in the world. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Joys & Concerns, Pastoral Prayer

\*HYMN *O God in Whom All Life Begins* (see insert)

### \*BENEDICTION

\*BENEDICTION RESPONSE *Sevenfold Amen*  
Senior Choir

\*POSTLUDE *Rejoice in the Lord, Always* Henry Purcell from Philippians 4:4, 6, 7

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### Thank you to our speakers this morning!

**Chris Hager**, a member of our church since 2019, is a teacher, writer, husband and father of two. Born and raised in Los Angeles, he lived for ten years in Chicago and has called Canton home since 2010. He has been on the faculty of Trinity College for the past 15 years and married to Ali Hager for the past 20. Chris is currently co-chair of our Christian Education Committee.

**Vicki Rees**, a member of our church since 2007 and a recent Deacon, lives in New Hartford with her husband, Andy, and two kids, Evan and Kendall. She works as a Special Education teacher in a program for Pre-K through grade 2 students with Autism and other communication-related disabilities. Vicki grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area, went to college and graduate school on the East Coast, and moved to Connecticut in 1998. She has traveled extensively during her life and thoroughly enjoys photography, landscaping projects, and time spent with family and friends.