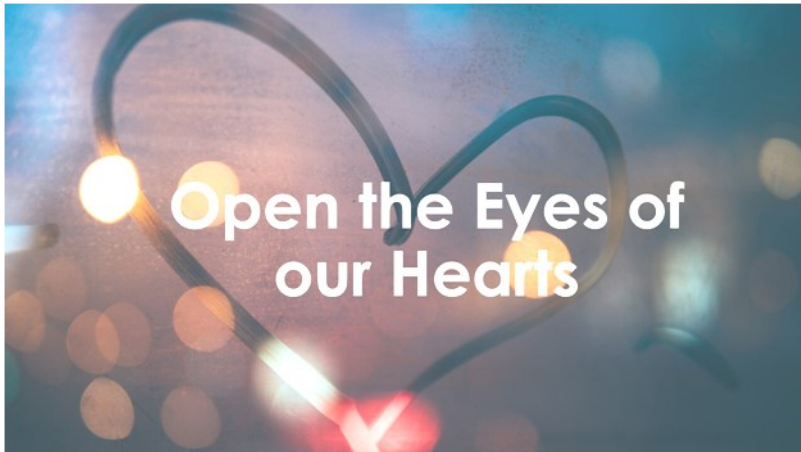




THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH CANTON CENTER, CT

March 19, 2023 ~ 10:00 a.m.

Fourth Sunday in Lent



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

Office 860-693-4581

E-mail: office@cantoncenterchurch.org

www.cantoncenterchurch.org

~ ORDER OF WORSHIP ~

**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

Prayer for Humanity
Cherry Brook Chimes Bell Choir

Linda Lamb

CALL TO WORSHIP

Friends, we gather again in the presence of our life-giving God,
trusting in the One who calls us to life.

Here we remember that we are beloved,
we and all that God has made.

Here we remember the gift of creation,
its beauty, its miracles, its place for all things.

Here we renew our commitment to open the eyes of our hearts,
learning to see as Christ sees, and to love as Christ loves.

***HYMN** *Be Thou My Vision* Chalice (blue), 595

*Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that thou art;
Thou my best thought by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.*

*Be thou my wisdom, and thou my true word;
I ever with thee and thou with me, Lord;
Thou my redeemer, my love thou hast won;
Thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one.*

*Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise,
Thou mine inheritance, now and always;
Thou and thou only, first in my heart
Great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.*

*Great God of heaven, my victory won,
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.*

***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 and the path of love.
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 the Lord, My Soul

The musical score is written for piano and voice. It consists of two systems. The first system has a treble and bass clef with a common time signature. The melody is in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's ho - ly name." The second system also has a treble and bass clef with a common time signature. The melody is in the treble clef, and the accompaniment is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me in - to life." Above the second system, the chords are indicated as Dm, G, Dm, Bb, C, and Dm. The score includes dynamic markings such as *p* and *f*, and articulation marks like slurs and accents.

ANTHEM *Lift Up Your Heads, O Gates*
Senior Choir

David von Kampen

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

We welcome into membership this morning: Richard Herbek and Robert Howson

Words of Introduction

Remembering Our Mission

**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.**

Questions of Commitment

Do you desire to affirm your baptism into the faith and family of Jesus Christ?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to be, as far as you are able, a disciple of Christ, following in the way of the gospel, witnessing to it by a life of love and justice, resisting oppression and evil, embracing all God gives you for a faithful life in the world?

Response: I do.

Do you promise, with God's help, to seek to grow in your Christian faith, to take your place in the Church universal and in this particular congregation, participating in the life and mission, the joys and labors, of the Body of Christ?

Response: I do.

*Welcome

**We welcome you with joy into this community of faith,
as together we share the hopes and labors
of the church of Jesus Christ.
In the power of God's spirit,
may we support, encourage and strengthen each other,
building community, following Jesus, serving all.
Grace, peace and welcome!**

*Prayer

***Sung response** *Blessed Be the Tie that Binds (adapted)*

*Blessed be the tie that binds / our hearts in Christian love;
the sharing of a common life / is like to that above.*

*Praise God for our fellowship here / praise God for the faith that we share,
praise God for all spirits that turn to the world / with love and peace and care.*

Following this, children may go to church school.

READING FROM SCRIPTURE John 9:1-41 Pew Bible page 871

SERMON *On Seeing*

DEDICATION OF OFFERINGS

The God of every goodness blesses us abundantly,
giving us gifts to use for the blessing of the world.
From our own lives into the lives of others,
**may the offerings we make,
in all the forms they take,
help us be the hands and feet of Christ in the world.**

***Doxology**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God, all creatures here below,
Praise God for all that love has done,
Creator, Christ and Spirit, One. Amen.*

***Prayer of Dedication**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Joys & Concerns, Pastoral Prayer

***HYMN** *Amazing Grace* Chalice (blue), 546

*Amazing grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found; was blind, but now I see.*

*'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed.*

*Through many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come;
'tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.*

*When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise than when we'd first begun.*

***BENEDICTION**

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE** *Sevenfold Amen*

***POSTLUDE** *Christ Whose Glory Fills the Skies*

Thomas Candlyn

WELCOME

We're glad you've joined us for worship today.
Please know that whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!
If you are visiting today, please help us get to know you better by filling out
one of the visitor cards in the pews and placing it in the offering plate.
Questions? Please feel free to ask the pastor, or call the church office during the week.

*The flowers today are given by Susie Mather
in celebration of Rev. Brenda.*

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

We extend our warmest welcome to those joining our church this morning:

Richard (Rick) Herbek:

Rick lives in Simsbury, is a retired city manager, and is the father of FCCCC member Eric Herbek. He enjoys golf, swimming and biking, and was formerly a member of the Christian Science Church.

Robert (Bob) Howson:

Bob lives in New Hartford, is retired as an MFR's agent. He enjoys golf and community service, and formerly belonged to the Collinsville Congregational Church and the Elmwood Community Church.

NEXT SUN., March 26:

Fourth Sunday food collection for the Canton Food Bank

Kendall Rees will share a Moment for Mission,
about her 2022 school mission trip in the Dominican Republic

Small-group opportunities for Lent

WHEN GOD FALLS OFF THE CEILING

Wed., Mar. 22, 7:00 p.m. OR Thurs., Mar. 23, 10:30 a.m

We'll read one chapter from Robin Meyers' book *Saving God from Religion*,
and consider his idea that the modern church has "a God crisis"
and that our basic ideas of God need to be re-thought. (Handout is available)

EASTER FLOWERS

With Easter just around the corner, it's time to order plants for our Easter Sunday service!

Lilies (\$14.00) and tulips (\$8.00) may be given in memory/celebration/honor of.

Please remember to take your plants after the Easter service to enjoy at home.

Orders for plants will be accepted through Friday, March 31,

and forms will be available in the Easter Basket at the back of the church until then.

SHOP SCRIP TODAY!

The Scrip table is set up every week during coffee hour. Stop by after the service for all your gift card needs or just to say "hi"! See what's available for immediate pick-up or place an order for next week.

We are also collecting Target & Walmart gift cards on behalf of the missions committee for Wellmore through the end of the month. Thanks for your support!

BRIAN'S ANGELS

On **Friday, March 24th at 10:00 am** we will start making a meal and at 11:00 am we will make sandwiches for those of you that want to help with that. There will be a sign up sheet on the kitchen door.

CLEAN SWEEP CLEANING SUPPLIES DRIVE

The Missions and Outreach Committee is working with Canton Social Services Dept. to benefit the Canton Food Bank with a Cleaning Supply Drive.

Dish detergent, dishwasher detergent, laundry detergent, all purpose cleaners and sponges can be collected now through **March 23rd in the Missions Collection Box.**

"FOCUS ON CANTON" IS BEING REVITALIZED!

This organization that has served the Canton community, providing financial and other support to residents in difficult times, is being revitalized after a pandemic-affected few years.

A meeting is being held for all who are interested in renewing this important service group:

Thurs., March 23, 7:00 p.m. in Room D of the Canton Community Center.

If you prefer to participate via Zoom, that option will be available.

Please contact Rina Pane with questions, or to let her know of your interest:

rinapane@aol.com, or 860-670-5865.

Sunday 19	Monday 20	Tuesday 21	Wednesday 22	Thursday 23	Friday 24	Saturday 25
Worship 10:00 am Reception of New Member	Choir 4:45 pm ACA & Al-Anon 7 pm	AA 7 pm	Faith Conversation 7 pm	Faith Conversation 10:30 am Choir 5:30 pm	Brian's Angels Sandwich & Meal Making 10 & 11 am	AA 11 pm

