



THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH CANTON CENTER, CT

March 5, 2023 ~ 10:00 a.m.

Second Sunday in Lent



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~ 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 *O Splendor of God's Glory Bright*

arr. Kevin Helderbrand

CALL TO WORSHIP

May the grace and peace of God be with us today,
renewing us in all our need.

May we be touched by the mysteries of love and hope,
strengthening us in all things.

May we remember today that whoever we are,
whatever our journey,

**Christ meets us on the way,
with love that welcomes and invites.**

Today may we renew our bonds with each other and with all others
in a community of Christ-like love.

***HYMN** *O Holy Spirit, Root of Life* Chalice (blue), 251

*O Holy Spirit, Root of life, Creator, cleanser of all things,
Anoint our wounds, awaken us with lustrous movement of your wings.*

*Eternal Vigor, Saving One, you free us by your living Word,
Becoming flesh to wear our pain, and all creation is restored.*

*O Holy Wisdom, Soaring Power, encompass us with wings unfurled,
And carry us, encircling all, above, below and through the world.*

*GATHERING PRAYER AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Loving God, Maker of all things,
we give you thanks for the gift of this new day
and its every blessing.

To this sacred place, we bring our lives --
the daily round of joy and sorrow, hope and need,
all that makes us human.

Open us for your wisdom, awaken us for your call,
strengthen us for your work.

In Christ's 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 voice and piano. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a tempo marking of quarter note = 10 and a dynamic marking of *p*. The lyrics are: "Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's ho - ly name." The second system has a dynamic marking of *p* and the lyrics: "Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me in - to life." The piano accompaniment includes chord markings: Dm, G, Dm, Bb, C, and Dm.

ANTHEM *The Whisper*
The Senior Choir

Susan Bentall Boersma/Craig Courney

Following this, children may go to church school

READING FROM SCRIPTURE Mark 8:27-36 Pew Bible p.820

SERMON *On Becoming Real*

DEDICATION OF OFFERINGS

We are grateful for our gifts,

and for the ability to give them.

We are mindful of our place in the web of creation,

and of the ways our generosity are needed.

Because we are the people of God and the community of Christ,

we open our hearts to the world around us.

*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 and Concerns, Pastoral Prayer

*HYMN *I Come with Joy* Chalice (blue), 420
 Vss. 1, 3 & 4

I come with joy, a child of God, forgiven, loved and free,

The life of Jesus to recall, in love laid down for me, in love laid down for me.

As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share, each proud division ends.

The love that made us, makes us one, and strangers now are friends,

And strangers now are friends.

The Spirit of the risen Christ, unseen but ever near,

Is in such friendship better known, alive among us here, alive among us here.

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Communion will be served in the pews; all are welcome to participate. As the elements are passed, please wait until all have been served and all will partake together. Gluten-free bread is in the center of each plate. The juice trays hold non-alcoholic grape juice, with a few cups of water also available on each.

Invitation

As we come to Christ's table, we remember that we are one body,
that God's love makes us one,

**whoever we are, whatever our journey,
whether we have been here many times before or never before.**

We remember that we are gathered in the spirit of the Risen Christ,
who sees not our differences but our oneness.

**As the many grains of wheat become the one loaf
and the many grapes become the one cup,
so do we become the one Body of Christ.**

Let this sacrament renew us in faith, hope and love,
binding us in covenant with God and with all others.

Prayer of Preparation

Recalling the Story: The Words of Institution

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving

**We give thanks to you, Holy One, for the gifts of your table,
reminders of all that strengthens us for faithful life.**

**As we go out into the world to live the gospel,
we pray that today and tomorrow
we might learn to see the world with Christ's eyes
and love the world with Christ's heart. Amen.**

***HYMN** *Go in Peace* Chalice (blue), 445

*Go in peace and the peace of God be with you this day.
Go in peace and the peace of God be with you always.
Celebrate and share the joy! Celebrate new life!
Go in peace and the peace of God be with you always.*

*BENEDICTION

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE** *Amen*

Members of the church are asked to remain in place for the Annual Meeting that will follow immediately after the end of the service. Children will remain in church school during the meeting.

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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS ~ March 5, 2023

*The flowers today are given by Kristin, April & Charlotte Oswald
in memory of their loving husband and father, Robert Charles Oswald.*

UPCOMING PROCESS FOR RECEIVING NEW MEMBERS IN MARCH

We look forward to receiving new members in our church on Sunday, March 19, with a preparatory/informational session to be held right after the service the prior week, March 12, with the pastor and Deacon representatives.

If you would like to join in March and have not already let the pastor know, please do so.

If you would like to attend the March 12 meeting to learn more, without obligation, you are most welcome.

Small-group opportunities for Lent

PARABLES SUBVERT WORLD:

Tues., Mar. 7, 1:00 pm. OR Wed., Mar. 8, 7:00 p.m.

Reflections on the how the parables of Jesus intend to change our seeing

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)

NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL MEETING

of the First Congregational Church, Canton Center, Connecticut, on Sunday, **March 5, 2023**
at 10:45 a.m. OR on subsequent Sundays at 10:45 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 Minutes from the previous meeting(s).
4. Receiving and accepting of the reports of the church officers, committee chairpersons, and staff.
5. Presentation, discussion and vote on bylaws amendment #15 - Article VII,
entitled Church Council, Section A, after the phrase "one representative from each of the
following boards and committees:", the following shall be inserted: "the Nominating Committee".
6. Any other business proper to come before the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Bev Sealand, Clerk

ANNUAL REPORTS

Copies of the Annual Report can be found on the back tables of the sanctuary
prior to the meeting this morning, following the service this morning.

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.**

Thank you!

| Sunday 5 | Monday 6 | Tuesday 7 | Wednesday 8 | Thursday 9 | Friday 10 | Saturday 11 |
|--|--|---|--------------------------------|----------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Worship 10:00 am Annual Meeting | Choir 5 pm ACA & Al-Anon 7 pm | Bible Study 1:00 pm AA 7 pm | Bible Study 7:00 pm | Choir 5:30 pm | | AA 11 pm |

