

# THE CHURCHMOUSE

Newsletter of The First Congregational Church, Canton Center, CT

June 2023

## Deacons' Bench

Tim Lundgren

### A Time of Change

Lobsters shed their old shells and grow new ones. Insects pass through their own life phases with transitions in between. We likewise pass through various stages of life with the transitions of birth, death, the first day of school, graduation, leaving home, the beginning of a new job, going off to college, marriage, and retirement. So do churches as our church is doing now. Transition is a necessary part of life. During these transitions there is not only great opportunity but also risk and a vulnerability that accompanies it. So we need to hold each other close, protecting each other and growing through this time.

Now that Pastor Brenda has retired and moved away, we as the members of the church are even more responsible for the running of things and for the moral and spiritual support of each other. Fortunately, we are a church of committed and engaged members. We take care of each other. As Paul writes in his Letter to the Galatians to "*Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.*" We do "*bear one another's burdens*", especially now in a season of transition.

We as Deacons find ourselves extremely busy with added duties and responsibilities. Eric has gone to great lengths to find and schedule our visiting pastors so that the schedule is 100% filled until August when we will be the guests of Canton Community Baptist for a month.

We as deacons confirm attendance with the supply pastor as well as supply information for the bulletins.

We fill out the requisition slips for the visiting pastor honorariums.

We take care of and arrange for the change of banners to be hung at the front of the sanctuary at the right time in the church calendar.

We provide Kristen in the main office with any worship or program related information.

We confirm with Mary Lou the hymns to be sung the following Sunday.

We call into the church on weekends to check the church voicemails and follow up as needed.

On Sunday morning we welcome the supply pastor to offer help and assistance.

We do the welcome and announcements on Sunday morning.

We note down the joys and concerns and turn them in to the main office.

And lastly, as I am doing now, we write and provide the deacons' bench article to go on the front of the *Church Mouse* where the pastor's letter went before.

But I'm sure there's more.

**WORSHIP IN JUNE**

- June 4 First Sunday after Pentecost  
*Ali Hager*
- June 11 Second Sunday after Pentecost; Communion  
*Rev. Terry Schmitt*  
Moment for Missions
- June 18 Third Sunday after Pentecost; Father's Day  
*Rev. David Figluzzi*
- June 25 Fourth Sunday after Pentecost  
*Rev. Bob Larochelle*  
Fourth Sunday Food Collection

**Summer  
Worship**

**SUMMER SERVICES WITH  
CANTON COMMUNITY  
BAPTIST CHURCH**

We will once again be sharing services in  
**July & August**  
with the Canton Community Baptist Church.

We will host in July,  
they will host in August.

*Services in both months are at 10:00 a.m.*

**Faith Formation News**

Dr. Hollace Bristol, Director of Faith Formation

Our theme for this year in Church School has been gratitude. We began the year in September with an agreement among the group that began, "I am grateful when we...." followed by a list of preferences for behavior while in class. At the end of each class we spoke an echo prayer together that was always an expression of gratitude. As the children left the sanctuary with the red wagon full of your much appreciated food donations, the children turned around and said, "Thank you!" The practice and energy of gratitude cannot be over-valued. Gratitude always brings us back to our heart center. As I pray each week for guidance and inspiration in crafting our Church School lessons, I find a starting place of gratitude to you, the families who share your children with me and Karen each week. In our small closing ceremony on Mother's Day, the children held up a sign that read, "We are the light." May your summer be light-filled as you share your light and notice the light in those around you. Blessings, always!



*Photos of our May 14 Worship Service*



## A Note from the President...

Grant Hagedorn

May has been a month of transition, new committee members adjusting to new roles and the first month since Reverend Brenda left. The diaconate is doing a great job with Sunday services. The interim search is transitioning to interviews. Everything is going well.

Please remember that if you need anything reach out through the church office, Kristen will then send the email to the correct person. [Office@CantonCenterChurch.org](mailto:Office@CantonCenterChurch.org)

Best Regards,

Grant Hagedorn  
[gwhagedorn@gmail.com](mailto:gwhagedorn@gmail.com)

Dear Members & Friends of Canton Center Church,

My last Sunday with you, on April 30, was.... something. What an amazingly meaningful day it was for me and my family, and I hope, for the congregation, as we marked the end of our time together. I was so deeply moved by all you did to make it so special and so loving.



I've read each and every one of your notes and messages from that morning, taking them all to heart. The choirs sang and played pieces I love. The gifts you gave me were beautiful, thoughtful, and extremely generous: the peace lily plant (my favorite variety); the elegant silver bracelet, engraved; the abundant gift cards for UConn athletics (basketball games!); a gift certificate for Café Aura, Coach Geno Auriemma's restaurant; the gorgeous portrait of my three-year-old grandson Max, painted by Tim Lundgren, which now hangs in our family room and looks like it was meant for exactly that spot. As you may have seen if you were there, I just about dissolved into a puddle when that painting was unveiled, an utter surprise ... nothing goes to my heart like Max, who was there with us and had a wonderful time at church. The reception was just beautiful, as I knew it would be, and the flowers you gave that day for the service and for me to take home are still, at this writing (almost a week later), still fresh-looking and gorgeous. So many ways that you opened your hearts to make this such a loving time of closure.

To all who had any part in putting that morning together or contributing to it, for your many weeks of planning, and to all who were present, I'm so grateful for your generosity. Thank you, thank you for everything... for having invited me to be your pastor for these last eight years and letting me be the one to walk alongside you through so much. I have cherished my time at Canton Center Church and always will.

Writer A. A. Milne said, *"I am lucky to have something that it's so hard to say good-bye to."*  
Amen and amen.

Love and peace,

The Rev. Brenda Pelc-Faszczka

## Musical Notes

Mary Lou Keefe, Director of Music



## WORSHIP MINISTRY

There seems to have been a revolution of sorts in society regarding church attendance with fewer adults attending and thus fewer children and young men and women. In past years the Junior Choir would have numbered anywhere between 12 and 20 and the Cherub choir at last count in 2019 numbered 18. Sadly those days seem to be over and why is that you ask. I believe and know there are multiple factors involved such as scheduling school and travel team games and practices on Sundays starting around 2007. Also, religion seems to be under attack in many ways. It has been taken out of our public schools. At one time not that long ago, church was considered a family activity. Sadly, that is no longer true in some cases. I consider myself very lucky to have a rather large senior choir and bell choir with what I consider very loyal folks as well as reliable guest singers and ringers. I have a total of 23 choir members with some doing double duty. We are also lucky to have accomplished instrumentalists.

On another note, I am always disappointed by the lack of congregational participation in the Maundy Thursday service. I have worked under four ministers, all great and all with different approaches to that service. It is a very contemplative one with many scripture readings and appropriate music and choir participation and it is sort of a metaphor for the last supper and everyone leaves in silence when it is over. This year we had 24 participants, including choir members, all the deacons, lighting crew, sound and the minister and me but only about 24 congregants. Please think about attending that in the future.

As the school year is winding down, the bell choir has finished for the year with a stunning piece, Recuerdos (Memories) accompanied with piano (me) and my son and Meg's twin Jon Keefe on guitar. I can't even say how many people complimented me and also the ringers and that indeed makes it all worthwhile.

The Senior choir and also guest singers have three more rehearsals with their last on June 12th and their last appearance in church on the 18th. After that the Summer Soloist Series will kick in with Jerry leading the way on June 25th. Part of the choir's repertoire presently include What A Wonderful World and the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's Messiah which will both be sung at the memorial service for Dick and Janice Anderson on June 3rd. Accompanying the song What A wonderful World will be Scott Neumann on guitar and Rose Minichiello on Sax.

*Special thanks to the following:*

*The Senior Choir & Guest:*

**Sopranos:** Donna, Marilyn, Judy, and guests Megan, Gina, and Kathy T.

**Altos:** Kathleen, Linda, Karen, Kathy P., Clare and guest Gert Delin.

**Tenors:** Jerry, Tim, and guest Scott.

**Basses:** Art, Paul, Jim, and guest Dan.

*The Handbell Choir*

Karen, Gina, Cindy, Diana, Hugh, Kathy P., Donna, Martha, Megan, and Judy

**Chime Player:** Karen Needham

*Our Instrumentalists:*

Jon Keefe on guitar and drums, Cindy Webb on flute, Scott Neumann on guitar

*The Music Committee:* Donna - chair, Kathleen -2 years, Marilyn - 3 years

## Missions & Outreach

Martha Stansel, Committee Member



### Moment for Missions:

Catherine Haugh, AASW Coordinator from Covenant to Care for Children, was our guest for the Moment for Missions on May 21st. As explained on their website ([covenanttocare.org](http://covenanttocare.org)) "Covenant to Care for Children provides a safety net for abused, neglected, or impoverished children in Connecticut by providing essential support in moments that are critical for a child's ability to thrive and a family's ability to stay together." Through their Adopt a Social Worker program (AASW), "community and faith-based organizations partner with a particular social worker to provide, as far as is possible, for the necessary and special items needed by the children in that worker's caseload."

Our congregation has supported social workers at Wellmore Behavioral Health ([wellmore.org](http://wellmore.org)) for several years as they help children and families in the Torrington area. We've provided backpacks and school supplies, holiday gifts, Thanksgiving meals, gift cards for Christmas and Easter, etc. During our Moment for Missions, Catherine led us in renewing our contract with Covenant to Care and promising to continue supporting our social worker.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH MINISTRY



**Would you like to help provide sandwiches for Brian's Angels during the summer?** Do you want to do it on a day that's convenient for you? We will not have scheduled days to get together and make a meal or sandwiches during June, July, and August. However, homelessness and hunger do not take a vacation during the summer.

If you or your family are interested in helping, there are a couple of different ways to volunteer. You can go to the Brian's Angels website ([briansangels.org](http://briansangels.org)), click on *See How You Can Help* and then scroll down and click on *Meal Train*. You'll see the calendar where you can sign up to make sandwiches, make a meal, or provide groceries like fruit or bottled water. You'll need to create a user name and password to sign up. They do not send you lots of emails, but they will send your reminders if you request them.

If you'd prefer, you can call or text Martha Stansel at 860-747-5344 or email her at [mwstsl@gmail.com](mailto:mwstsl@gmail.com). She will help set you up for your preferred time through the church's signup account. She can also send you instructions for making and delivering sandwiches or a meal.

Also, if you're cleaning out your attic, garage, etc. this summer, don't forget that **Brian's Angels can always use tents, tarps, and sleeping bags.** If you get them to the church, we'll make sure they get delivered.

### Missions Box:



**The June and July Missions Box collection will be backpacks and school supplies for the children served by Wellmore.** Some of the suggested items for donation are pencils, pens, markers (non-permanent), colored pencils, crayons, binders, notebook paper, spiral notebooks, colorful folders including pocket folders, glue sticks, blunt scissors, tape, rulers, and so on. In other words, any supplies a child would need to have a good start and be successful in school.

*Since we will not be worshipping in our sanctuary during the month of August, we will resume Missions Box collections in September. Watch the next Churchmouse for more info.*

THANK YOU

**Our April collection for Holy Joe's Café raised an amazing \$565.**

Thank you for your generosity in providing coffee and support to military chaplains and our troops around the world.

### ***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

### **THE STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL, JUNE 18, 2023 ~ FATHER'S DAY ~ 3 pm to 7 pm**



We have had a good response for shortcake bakers and strawberry hullers. We are going to put up sign up sheets for the other jobs necessary to have a traditional strawberry festival. This would include eating inside as well as take out. We will offer hamburgers, hot dogs and beverages. **Please save the date and sign up to help make the event successful.** This is a Wider Church event and we are all members of Wider Church. Many hands make light work! If you have any questions, please call Donna Hammond: 860-693-8676 or 860-882-8375.



**Yard Goats Game** - We are taking ticket reservations for a Yard Goats Game on **June 9th at 7:10 pm**. Tickets are priced at \$10.00 each with a limit of 6 tickets per family. Check your calendar and hope you can make it!

*Phil Worley is now living at  
Cherry Brook Nursing Home,  
and any visitors are welcome!*



*Thank you to Dan Bristol for once again  
providing beautiful pansy plants  
for our congregation on Mother's Day,  
a tradition begun by  
Ruth Bristol in the 1940s,  
in memory of her son,  
Sterling W. Bristol, Jr.,  
who was killed in WWII.*



### **Graduates & Families:**

If you are or have a graduate that would like to share information about your high school, college, grad school, etc. with us, for our summer newsletter, please email the church office at [office@cantoncenterchurch.org](mailto:office@cantoncenterchurch.org).

# JUNE 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 Anderson Memorial 11:30 am  AA 11:00 p.m.
4  <b>Worship</b> 10:00 am	5  Sr. Choir 5:00 pm  Al-Anon/ACA 7:00 pm	6  AA 7:00 pm	7  <b>Deacons Meeting</b> 7:00 pm	8	9  <b>Yard Goats Game</b> 7:10 pm	10  AA 11:00 p.m.
11  <b>Worship &amp; Communion</b> 10:00 am Moment for Missions	12  Sr. Choir 5:00 pm  <b>Trustees</b> 7:00 pm  Al-Anon/ACA 7:00 pm	13  AA 7:00 pm	14  <b>Council Meeting</b> 7:00 pm	15	16	17  AA 11:00 p.m.
18 <b>Worship</b> 10:00 am  <b>STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL 3-7 PM</b>  	19  Al-Anon/ACA 7:00 pm	20  AA 7:00 pm	21	22	23	24  AA 11:00 p.m.
25  <b>Worship</b> 10:00 am  4th Sunday Food Collection	26  Al-Anon/ACA 7:00 pm	27  AA 7:00 pm	28	29	30	



The Churchmouse  
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Kristen DiMattia, Office Manager  
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**Organist/Director of Music:**

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Mary Lou Keefe  
music@cantoncenterchurch.org

**Director of Faith Formation:**

Dr. Hollace Bristol  
CE@cantoncenterchurch.org

**Assistant Director of Faith Formation:**

Karen Needham  
CE@cantoncenterchurch.org

**Worship every Sunday  
at 10:00 a.m.**

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*We're on the Web!*

Visit us at: [cantoncenterchurch.org](http://cantoncenterchurch.org)

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