



**THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
CANTON CENTER, CT**

&

THE CANTON COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH

July 23, 2023 ~ Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

10:00 a.m. In Person & Live Streamed



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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 of the church.*

PRELUDE

Ave Verum

Cindy Webb - flute

W.A. Mozart

CALL TO WORSHIP

Faithful God, we come into Your presence with thanksgiving,
deeply grateful for the unfailing love and faithfulness
You have shown toward us, Your people.
When we call out to You, You answer.
When we are exhausted, You give us the strength to go on.
When we find ourselves in trouble, You are there, standing beside us.

**And so we come before You with gratitude and praise,
offering You the worship of our hearts and lives.
Open our eyes to see and know You here among us;
open our ears to recognize Your voice.
And then send us out from here, to live and work
in the world as Your faithful disciples.
In the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

***HYMN**

Sweet Hour of Prayer

Chalice (blue), 570

*Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer! That calls me from a world of care,
and bids me at my Father's throne make all my wants and wishes known.
In seasons of distress and grief, my soul has often found relief,
and oft escaped the tempter's snare by thy return, sweet hour of prayer!*

*Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer! The joys I feel, the bliss I share
of those whose anxious spirits burn with strong desires for thy return!
With such I hasten to the place where God my Savior shows his face,
and gladly take my station there, and wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer!*

*Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer! Thy wings shall my petition bear
to him whose truth and faithfulness engage the waiting soul to bless.
And since he bids me seek his face, believe his word, and trust his grace,
I'll cast on him my every care, and wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer!*

*GATHERING PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Grant us this day, O God, not to be overtaken by anxious thoughts that can make us feel that you are not near.

We come here to sit at your feet, to absorb every word and every musical note.

We seek to feel your real presence within and among us and, in turn, to live out that presence within this, your needy world.

Prepare us on this, our journey of worship as we gather, listen and pray, in the name of Jesus. Amen+

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 begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 2/4 time signature. The melody is written on a five-line staff with a soprano clef. The lyrics are: "Bless God, O my soul! All with - in me bless God's name!". The second staff continues the melody with the lyrics: "Bless God, who was, and is, and shall ev - er be the same!". The music is in a simple, hymn-like style with a clear melodic line and accompaniment.

ANTHEM *Sicilienne* Cindy Webb - flute

J.S. Bach

READINGS FROM SCRIPTURE

Matthew 13:24-30

Pew Bible pg. 794

Romans 8:12-25

Pew Bible pg. 919

SERMON *With Eager Longing*

Rev. Dr. Robert R. LaRochelle

DEDICATION OF OFFERINGS

O God who gathers more, and still more, people to your table —

a table that is not contained by our one church, but extends

across varied worship spaces, across diverse cultures and communities —

bless the gifts that each of us brings today.

May they strengthen bodies and nourish spirits, and be used for your glory.

*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 *I Love to Tell the Story* Chalice (blue), 480

*I love to tell the story of unseen things above, of Jesus and his glory,
of Jesus and his love. I love to tell the story, because I know tis true;
it satisfies my longings as nothing else can do.*

(Reprieve)

*I love to tell the story, twill be my theme in glory,
to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love.*

*I love to tell the story; tis pleasant to repeat what seems, each time I tell it,
more wonderfully sweet. I love to tell the story, for some have never heard
the message of salvation from God's own holy word.*

*I love to tell the story, for those who know it best seem hungering and thirsting
to hear it like the rest. And when, in scenes of glory, I sing the new, new song,
twill be the old, old story that I have loved so long.*

*BENEDICTION

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE *Amen*

*HYMN *The Church of Christ in Every Age* Chalice (blue), 475

*The church of Christ in every age, beset by change but Spirit led,
must claim and test its heritage and keep on rising for the dead.*

*Across the world, across the street, the victims of injustice
cry for shelter and for bread to eat, and never live until they die.*

*Then let the servant church arise, a caring church that longs to be
a partner in Christ's sacrifice, and clothed in Christ's humanity.*

*For Christ alone, whose blood was shed, can cure the fever in our blood,
and teach us how to share our bread and feed the starving multitude.*

*We have no mission but to serve in full obedience to our Lord:
to care for all, without reserve, and spread Christ's liberating word.*

*POSTLUDE *Sheep May Safely Graze* Cindy Webb - flute J.S. Bach