

# THE CHURCHMOUSE

Newsletter of The First Congregational Church, Canton Center, CT

November 2023



## *Message from the pastor...*

*Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.*

*(Colossians 3:2)*

Dear Church Family,

Life is uncertain and unsettling at times especially in these past weeks following the atrocity of Hamas' attack on Israel and the retaliation strike on Palestine, leaving many innocent civilians captive, injured, and thousands dead. As you and I question and mourn the innocent victims and their families from this present-day war along with the Ukrainian and Russian war, we seek understanding of how we will ever discover world peace.

These are troubling times for all. Shocked and devastated by these attacks let us continue to strengthen one another in our unity of faith, with our prayers and love for one another. Jesus tells us in John 16:33, *In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.*

Violence is a cancer that generates fear, anguish and hopelessness for many. Jesus tells us we will witness suffering and tribulation in the world however this is contrary to God's will. When manmade tragedies occur, and let us pray they cease, please remember, *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, Psalm 46:1.*

Please know that I welcome all who would like to speak with me that are having a difficult time with either the world's ills, a church matter, or a personal situation. Talking about issues that haunt our thoughts, darken our outlook, or daily distress us can be cathartic and liberating. Together we can be a church that promotes justice, peace, and love for all people to the glory of God.

The Psalmist writes: *When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears and delivers them out of all their troubles. The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. Psalm 34:17-18.*

In Christ's love,

*Pastor Kurt*

## WORSHIP MINISTRY



*All Sunday services are held in-person and live streamed. For access to the live stream at 10 a.m. on Sundays, see our website, [www.cantoncenterchurch.org](http://www.cantoncenterchurch.org).*

*Please note that recordings of services already past will be posted on the website (see "Connect with Us") as soon thereafter as possible. Viewing may not be accessible as soon as the same day after a Sunday.*

**Nov. 5 Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost; Communion**

**Nov. 12 Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost;** Guest preacher will be the Rev. Suzy Rivera  
*Moment for Missions (Asante Sana)*

**Nov. 19 Thanksgiving Sunday**  
*Long Time Member Recognition and Thanksgiving Potluck*

**Nov. 26 Twenty-Sixth Sunday after Pentecost**

### Musical Notes

Mary Lou Keefe, Director of Music



The Saga or the C4 handbell

On a crisp clear recent Thursday evening while the bell ringers were rehearsing, suddenly there was a gasp and an: "Oh no" The C4 handbell had actually broken apart for no known reason and was lying on the table unable to be rung at all. This was a bell that belonged to a certain lady named Megan. She helped to carefully wrap it up and was determined to get it repaired. The next morning she called Malmark, the company that makes them and also repairs them, learned that it was not under warranty and that they would send out a kit to repair it. The bell was one of the several original bells that were purchased in 1982 and therefore over 40 years old. The next step was to find a choir that could lend us that same bell. The next call went to Mark Mercier, music director at the Simsbury Congregational who very graciously gave Megan several names of choir directors in the area. She was able to track down one in Simsbury that was not using that particular bell. In the meantime we are awaiting the delivery of the parts and Megan's brother Jason has promised to try to fix it. Megan is my daughter and Jason my son. Let us hope the C4 will be fixed post haste.

The Senior Choir in the next few weeks will be doing double duty in that they will rehearse for the regular Sunday anthems as well as work on a cantata entitled "Have You Heard" by Joel Raney. They experienced a taste of it Monday night as we listened to the opening song and then sang it with very positive comments. The choir and guest singers, Dan, Meg, and Gert, will be presenting it on Dec. 17th during the regular Sunday service. Additionally, there will be a small orchestra accompanying it: flute- Cindy Webb, a consort of recorders, Marianne Rannenberg, drums and guitar- Jon Keefe, piano and organ. Following the service will be an enhanced coffee hour. This is sure to get everyone in the mood for the holidays.

The Senior Choir sings most, if not all, Sundays. The handbell choir will be playing on the following dates: Oct. 29, Nov. 19, Dec. 17, and Christmas Eve.

Special thanks to all my singers, ringers, and instrumentalists.

## Deacon's Bench

Phil Doyle



As the greater Canton Center Church community moves through the process of ministerial change, following the retirement of Reverend Brenda, the Sunday service will, by necessity, evolve and reflect the moment. The variety of service styles and sermon messages from the numerous “Supply Pastors” has been educational and enlightening. Each visiting “Supply Pastor” brought something unique and positive to our Church. With our Interim Minister, Reverend Kurt Satherlie, the Diaconate looks forward to the challenge of fresh ideas, and like you, expects some change. It is the express intent of the United Church of Christ to use the interim period to create change and insert a time of separation between periods of settled ministry. Discussion over the time interval between settled pastors is inevitable, as is discussion about styles and preferences. Most Church members have been through such a time before, we let the process unfold. Perhaps, the sense of change has been magnified by the recent COVID period. COVID initially forced isolation then a period of social distancing. Our Church created an on-line Sunday service streaming system, and upon return to in person services, the Diaconate modified the service to include social distancing protocols. Now that we have emerged from the COVID period, we are able to incorporate some traditional aspects of the service such as the separate serving of bread and wine (juice) during Communion and the passing of the collection plate. During the COVID period, the Diaconate took attendance by name; that process has recently been eliminated, there being less chance of a mass COVID infection event. Another example of change may be the modification of the Doxology to modernize the language, while keeping the sense of tradition. As we all move forward into Reverend Kurt’s interim ministry, we look to focus upon the spiritual health of the Church and the needs of the membership. Please remember, the Diaconate is elected to represent your interests. The congregation membership owns and controls the church and the services; let the Diaconate know your thoughts and preferences. What change and/or stabilizing influences best reflect your thoughts about the service? How should the services evolve to reflect the congregational needs?

## THE PERFECT TIME TO SCRIP!

November is here! This time of year always flies by for me. The days are suddenly much shorter, which generally means I want to stay inside more and sleep longer. It also means that Christmas will be here before we know it!

Christmas seems to be getting even an earlier push than normal this year due to the “supply chain shortage”. Don’t worry that you’ll be shut out of getting that perfect gift if you haven’t started shopping yet. Gift Cards through Scrip are always here for you! And starting Sunday, 11/7, we’ll get back to having a table set up in the parish hall right after church, whether or not we’re having coffee hour. If you’re not in church, don’t worry about that either. You can always call or email me (860-693-0134 or [c.levine@comcast.net](mailto:c.levine@comcast.net)) or you can place an order online or

through the RaiseRight app. Reach out to me for our church’s unique enrollment code if you wish to place an order electronically.

Scrip cards are available for over 750 retailers – from large chain stores and restaurants to smaller national shops, and lots of online retailers. We even have Visa cards available in various denominations – with no activation fee that you would pay if you bought them in the store. Of course, grocery stores remain our most popular cards - Stop & Shop and Shop Rite are available every week in different denominations. The ways you can use Scrip gift cards are only limited by your imagination! And don’t forget that every card you purchase – big or small – earns money for our church.

Thanks, as always, for your support! Casey

## Missions & Outreach News

### Moment for Missions:

Ashley Washburn will be our special guest for Moment for Missions on November 12<sup>th</sup>. You won't want to miss hearing Ashley speak about **Asante Sana for Education** which she founded in Tanzania.

Their mission is to Empower Tanzanian Youth and Strengthen Communities through Education. Not only will she be speaking, she will also have an art show and sale during coffee hour which will feature beautiful items made by artists in Tanzania.

The proceeds from the sale benefit Asante Sana. It's a great opportunity to start your holiday shopping as well as talk to Ashley a little more about her mission.

You can check out their website at <https://www.asantesanaforeducation.com>.

### Missions Box Collection:

Our November collection will be **gift cards for the families served by Wellmore**. You may remember that we purchased gifts in the past, but Wellmore has been requesting gift cards recently.

Cards for places like Wal-Mart and Target enable families to shop for desired Christmas items themselves. Remember, you can bring in gift cards or, even better, **purchase from Scrip** after church. All cards can be given to Geri Bunnell or Casey Levine. Stay tuned to the weekly updates for more information.

### Missions Gift Card Collection:

In the past we have collected gifts and gift cards for a family here in Canton. We have recently received information from **Canton Social Services** that they will also be collecting gift cards this year.

Stay tuned for weekly updates.

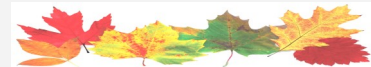
### Brian's Angels:

We will meet at **11:00 a.m. on Friday, November 17<sup>th</sup>** to make sandwiches for Brian's Angels.

**Susan B. Anthony** - We have recently learned that Susan B. Anthony will no longer be making Christmas wreaths and centerpieces.

## A Pastoral Search Update from the Church Council

Hugh Anderson, 2nd Vice President



Fall is a time of new beginnings for the church and we are blessed to begin this church year with our new interim pastor, Reverend Kurt Satherlie. Rev Kurt is now several weeks into his ministry with us and we are all off to a great start. Whether you've been regular attendees or maybe not as much lately, we encourage members and friends of the church of all ages to join us on Sunday mornings for a new season of family worship, church school and great fellowship.

Part of celebrating our new interim ministry is to work with Rev Kurt and all of you to begin the process of search and call for a settled pastor. This is a more involved process than the interim search was, and includes a focused opportunity for self reflection, understanding our identity as a church and how we wish to grow and prosper in the world and in our community moving forward.

So now what? We begin by formulating a pastoral search committee. A committee that will drive the process while also being inclusive of the voices of all members. We will be seeking committee participation from all ages, genders, and perspectives. And we welcome a cross section of regular attendees as well as those of you who may see this as an opportunity to shape the church's future and return to more active involvement.

**If you'd like to be considered for the search committee, or would like to suggest someone instead, there are several immediate ways to do so.** Please send a private email to [cantoncenterpastorsearch@gmail.com](mailto:cantoncenterpastorsearch@gmail.com), call the church office, or use the confidential suggestion box which is on the table outside the kitchen entrance.

We hope to have a list of names very soon so the Council may act and establish a committee to begin the search process in January, right after the holidays. This is an exciting time in the life of the church. Let's all be a part of it!

## Faith Formation

Hollace Bristol, Director of Faith Formation



Wow!! Can you feel it? What wonderful energy in the church this past weekend!

It takes a village to put on the Chicken Pie Supper, and that is what it felt like: teamwork, hugs, camaraderie, focus, support, generosity, flexibility, and commitment.

It is a gift to be able to work together on an event that has been a tradition in our church for over one hundred years. I heard stories about how the tradition has morphed over the years, not in terms of the menu, but in how it is orchestrated, such as moving from taking reservations for different seatings to come anytime.

But the core of it, the celebration of our church community is constant. It is part of our foundation.

I believe that engagement in these communal experiences serves us individually as well as collectively; that participation strengthens our sense of value, meaning and purpose. Our Church School program has these as goals: engaging young people toward a greater sense of value, meaning and purpose through experiences that embody the teachings of Jesus.

In the Second Hour led by Rev. Kurt recently, we explored ways to invite more families to engage in community with us. We know that current demands on family time are often conflicting. We welcome all ideas about how we as a church community can serve you better or be more inspiring. Feel free to contact me [hlbristol@msn.com](mailto:hlbristol@msn.com) or 928-853-0311.

## Historian's Corner

Tim LeGeyt, Historian

There are several/many sub-groups of our congregation and the Senior Choir is one, maybe the longest standing sub-group of all, except perhaps for the Diaconate. Our Senior Choir has existed since back in the 1800's with many members and several Choirmasters, the two longest-serving choirmasters being Anson Bristol and immediately thereafter Bill Thomas, between them serving for almost 100 years throughout the whole of the 1900's.

Having been a fifty-plus year member myself, I have personal memories of my tenure, having joined in 1969 and enjoying many years of large choirs.

Some years we had to find extra places to sit in the choir loft (we probably avoided the Fire Marshall's inevitable cease and desist order)! We had many parties and this picture is a memory of one of them - a gathering at Bill and Ellie Thomas' house. I don't know why I missed this party (I didn't take the picture), but I wish I had been there. We had fun!!!

The nice thing about our choir is that we accept everyone - you don't have to audition, just come and find a seat. It's so much fun to sing with people where your voice melds with the other parts of an anthem, creating rich harmonies. We're practicing to present a cantata during Advent and if you want something to bring out your Christmas Spirit early, come to choir and find a seat!!!



Choir Party @ Bill and Ellie Thomas' – 1989

Back Row: David Hetrick, Rev. Evans Sealand, David and Florence Godfrey, Rod Miller, Dick Petersen

Al Knight, Russ Schneider, Peg and Larry Carlton, Dick Sanger, Jim Todd

Third Row: Peg Collavecchio, Carol Taylor, Pat Healy, Linda Kriksciun

Second Row: Linda McAllister, Eleanor Bussolini, Bonnie Hetrick, Jean Kriksciun, Ellie Thomas, Joy Petersen – (Organist), Jane Schneider

Front Row: Helen Bogle, Mary Bowman, Ginnie Stapelfeld, Evelyn Sealand, Bill Thomas – (Director)

**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 and Affirming Congregation*



Our annual Sunday-before-Thanksgiving pot luck meal will take place after the service on **November 19**.

Sponsored each year by the Wider Church Fellowship Committee, this event brings our church family together to enjoy a Thanksgiving-style lunch.

We will need a few people to bring roasted turkeys and, others to bring side dishes and desserts.

**Please see the sign up sheet on the kitchen door.**

**Trustees News**

Phil LeGeyt



The Board of Trustees is planning the

**FALL CLEAN UP DAY**

**Saturday, November 4th**

**8:30 - 12:00 pm**

We'll be doing some outdoor things and getting ready for winter.

If you could, please bring rakes, leaf blowers, and hedge trimmers. Coffee and something yummy will be supplied.

**PLEDE CAMPAIGN**

The **pledge campaign** is on, please remember to return your pledge cards as quickly as possible.

*Thank you.*

**IN THE EVENT OF INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Please tune to:

**WFSB Channel 3 or NBC CT News Channels**



# NOVEMBER 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1  <b>Deacons' Meeting</b> 7:00 pm	2  Cub Scouts 6:30-8 pm Handbell Choir 5:30 pm	3	4  <b>Fall Clean Up</b> 8:30 - 12 pm  AA 11:00 p.m.
5 <b>Worship &amp; Communion</b> 10:00 am 	6 Sr. Choir 4:30 pm Guest 5:15 pm Al-Anon/ACA 7:00 pm	7  AA 7:00 pm	8	9  Handbell Choir 5:30 pm	10	11  AA 11:00 p.m.
12 <b>Worship</b> 10:00 a.m. <i>Moment for Missions</i> <i>Asante Sana/Art Sale</i>	13 <b>Trustee Meeting</b> 7:00 pm Sr. Choir 4:30 pm Guest 5:15 pm Al-Anon/ACA 7:00 pm	14  AA 7:00 pm	15  <b>Council Meeting</b> 7:00 pm	16  Handbell Choir 5:30 pm	17 <b>Sandwich making for Brian's Angels</b> 11:00 am	18  AA 11:00 p.m.
19 <b>Worship</b> 10:00 a.m. <i>Long Term Member Recognition</i> <b>Thanksgiving Potluck</b>	20 Sr. Choir 4:30 pm Guest 5:15 pm Al-Anon/ACA 7:00 pm	21  AA 7:00 pm	22	23 	24	25  AA 11:00 p.m.
26 <b>Worship</b> 10:00 a.m. <i>Fourth Sunday Food Collection</i>	27 Sr. Choir 4:30 pm Guest 5:15 pm Al-Anon/ACA 7:00 pm	28  AA 7:00 pm	29	30  Handbell Choir 5:30 pm		



The Churchmouse  
The First Congregational Church  
(United Church of Christ)  
184 Cherry Brook Road  
P O Box 133  
Canton Center, CT 06020-0133



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### **The First Congregational Church**

184 Cherry Brook Road, PO Box 133  
Canton Center, CT 06020-0133  
[Cantoncenterchurch.org](http://Cantoncenterchurch.org)

#### **Interim Pastor**

860-693-4207

Pastor Kurt Satherlie

[pastor@cantoncenterchurch.org](mailto:pastor@cantoncenterchurch.org)

#### **Office**

(860)693-4581

Kristen DiMattia, Office Manager  
[office@cantoncenterchurch.org](mailto:office@cantoncenterchurch.org)

Mon.- Fri. 8:00 - 3:00 p.m.

#### **Organist/Director of Music:**

(860)693-4216

Mary Lou Keefe

[music@cantoncenterchurch.org](mailto:music@cantoncenterchurch.org)

#### **Director of Faith Formation:**

Hollace Bristol

[CE@cantoncenterchurch.org](mailto:CE@cantoncenterchurch.org)

#### **Assistant Director of Faith Formation:**

Karen Needham

[CE@cantoncenterchurch.org](mailto:CE@cantoncenterchurch.org)

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