



THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH CANTON CENTER, CT

April 7, 2024 ~ 10:00 a.m.
Second Sunday of Easter

*Write it on your heart that every day is the best day of the year.
He is rich who owns the day, and no one owns the day who allows
it to be invaded with fret and anxiety. This new day is too dear,
with its hopes and invitations, to waste a moment on the yesterdays.*

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson



*Life is a very great gift and a great good, not because of what it gives us,
but because of what it enables us to give to others. ~Thomas Merton*

*Seize
the
Day*



*LIFE IS SHORT
CARPE DIEM*

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~ ORDER OF WORSHIP ~

Please stand if able. **Bold denotes unison response.*

CHIMES

Karen Needham

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Those wishing to make a brief 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.

PRELUDE

There is a Green Hill Far Away

Alexander / Armstrong

During the prelude silently send Christ's Joy, Peace, & Love to the person near you, to others in the church & to God's world

CALL TO WORSHIP

As the sun rises, we wake to a picture-perfect day. The sky is ocean blue, the mild breeze blows through the treetops, and the birds sing their songs of praise to the God who has offered them and us a gift yet to be enjoyed. We pause, lifting our heartfelt prayers upward to a loving God, our arms and legs stretching with expectation for within this moment lies a world of possibilities.

With thanksgiving we offer God our deepest gratitude for another day to enjoy, explore, and extend kindness and joy to all creatures who share our planet.

The Roman poet Horace whispered, "Seize the day!" How do we truly grasp this fleeting gift? In prayer, let us turn towards the Light, seeking the sacred in the ordinary.

Let us gather, a community united, to find purpose in the present moment, in our next breath. Here, in this shared space, we open our hearts and minds, ready to be filled. Come, let us worship the God of all creation!

***HYMN**

Holy, Holy, Holy. Lord God Almighty

Pilgrim (red) #251

***GATHERING PRAYER & *THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Dear God, let us break free from the shackles that bind us to any distraction of yesterday, and lead us to chase the possibilities of today. Each day is a gift and we ask not for grand events or happenings but with a quiet reverence for the preciousness of each moment. In the peacefulness of this space, we seek solace in the shared experience of worshiping You. We gather, not to simply exist, but to ignite the spark within. We hear Your call ~ "Don't let this moment pass you by!" This day is ours to claim, to fill with acts of kindness, laughter, and growth and we embrace the adventure that unfolds. In this spirit of Carpe Diem, we begin our journey. 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.

***Gloria Patri**

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost,
as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,
world without end, Amen, Amen.*

POEM A Vibrant Song (Carpe Diem Theme; author unknown)

Deacon: Sunlight streams, a golden tide, waking hearts where shadows hide.
New creation, born again, nature's song, a joyful hymn.

Congregation: Open wide our arms, embrace the day, sing for joy, let worries fade away. Love awakes, a vibrant fire, in this place, our spirits soar higher.

Deacon: Voices rise, a joyful sound, gathering here on holy ground. Sisters, brothers, hand in hand, one in faith, in this promised land.

Choir: Open wide our arms, embrace the day, sing for joy, let worries fade away. Love awakes, a vibrant fire, in this place, our spirits soar higher.

Deacon: Carpe diem, seize the light, let our worship take flight.
In this moment, hearts ignite, filled with love, and radiant might.

Congregation/choir: Open wide our arms, embrace the day, sing for joy, let worries fade away. Love awakes, a vibrant fire, in this place, our spirits soar higher.

Deacon: Higher, higher, let our praises rise, to the heavens, where our hope resides.
Here we gather, hearts aflame, singing glory in your holy name.

OFFERING

We read these words in Luke 6:38: *Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap, for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.* With grateful hearts let us now receive our Sunday morning offering.



OFFERTORY

Let the Praise Go Round Wm. Boyce arr. Hal Hopson
Senior Choir

***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**

Inspired by the call to "seize the day," and acknowledging the fleeting nature of time, we dedicate these offerings, not just as material things, but as symbols of our commitment to live fully, with purpose and love. May they empower our acts of service, and ask that You guide us to use these resources wisely, to invest in moments that build community, and to extend compassion to all. We ask Your blessings and dedicate ourselves and these gifts to Your service, Amen

SCRIPTURE

Ecclesiastes: 9:7-12

Pew Bible pg. 541

SERMON

CARPE DIEM ~ SEIZE THE DAY

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

Joys & Concerns - Moment of Silence - Pastoral Prayer

HYMN (seated)

Be Known to Us in Breaking Bread

Chalice (Blue) 398

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation ~ Prayer over the Elements ~ Serving of the Elements

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Blessed are we Lord for filling us with Your presence, a flame of love that warms our hearts and renews our spirits. May this holy meal flow through us into the world.

Make us beacons of light radiating Your compassion and grace lifting praise to Your Holy Name. This we pray nourished by Your love. Amen

***HYMN**

Lead Me, Lord

Chalice (Blue) #254

***BENEDICTION**

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE** *Amen*

***POSTLUDE**

Grand Chorus in B Flat

Theodore Dubois

THE WORSHIP IS ENDED ~OUR SERVICE NOW BEGINS