

# THE CHURCHMOUSE

Newsletter of The First Congregational Church, Canton Center, CT

May 2025



## *A Message from Pastor Kurt...*

*For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. ~Romans 12:4,5*

Several years ago, I read an amazing fact about Redwood Trees. It brings to mind how important unity and connection is within nature, especially with these majestic, gigantic, California trees. Unity and connection are similarly just as important in our personal lives and our congregation. Let me elaborate.

Are you aware that the Coast Redwood tree can reach heights of 400 feet, 100 feet wide and grow two to ten feet a year. They can weigh over one and a half million pounds and live 2000 years. These regal behemoths, some of the tallest living things on earth, stand their ground against the toughest of storms and are impervious to the strongest winds. Logically, one would reason with their size and weight, the taproot would grow deep into the earth with countless other roots to withhold such a massive tree. What's truly remarkable is that their individual root systems are surprisingly shallow. Their strength and resilience do not come from a deep, singular taproot, but rather from an intricate network of roots that intertwine and connect with those of their neighboring trees. It's in this interconnectedness that they find the stability to weather storms and stand tall for centuries. Just like these towering trees, we strengthen our individual faith journey when we are deeply connected to one another. Getting to know each other, truly understanding the diverse stories and experiences within our congregation, is like our roots beginning to intertwine. As we share our lives, our joys, and our challenges, we create a network of understanding and empathy that provides a strong foundation for us all.

In the coming weeks the Diaconate and I will hold a second hour and engage our congregation to share some of their life stories as we seek to know one another on a deeper level than sharing a coffee and small talk during our time of Fellowship. We are not looking to share deep, dark secrets, only those things that you care to share with questions that resonate with you such as:

- ♦ Where did you grow up, and what are one or two vivid memories from your childhood?
- ♦ What is a family tradition that is special to you?
- ♦ What was a favorite subject or activity you enjoyed in school?
- ♦ What is a hobby or passion that brings you joy and energy?
- ♦ What is a place you've traveled to that has had a significant impact on you?
- ♦ What is a book, movie, or piece of music that has resonated with you deeply?
- ♦ What is a simple pleasure in life that you appreciate?
- ♦ What is a value that is important to you and why?
- ♦ What is something you've learned in life that you would share with others?
- ♦ What is a challenge you've overcome that has shaped who you are? (Share only if comfortable)
- ♦ What is something you are grateful for right now?
- ♦ What brought you to this congregation?
- ♦ What is one aspect of your faith journey that has been meaningful to you?
- ♦ Is there a particular Bible verse or spiritual teaching that resonates with you?
- ♦ What is a funny or memorable anecdote you'd be willing to share?
- ♦ What is a hidden talent you have?
- ♦ If you could have any superpower, what would it be and why?

This May and the months that follow, let us be inspired to intentionally cultivate deeper connections with one another, allowing our "roots" to intertwine through meaningful conversations and genuine care. By supporting each other in our faith we too can stand tall and strong, weathering the storms of life together and reflecting the enduring love of God. May our connections deepen and our community flourish, just like a thriving redwood forest.

## WORSHIP MINISTRY

## WORSHIP IN MAY

*All Sunday services are at 10 a.m., in person and live streamed on our web page: [CantonCenterChurch.org](http://CantonCenterChurch.org) or YouTube.*

- May 4     Third Sunday of Easter; *Communion*  
            *Second Hour - Safety in our Houses of Worship*
- May 11    Fourth Sunday of Easter;  
            *Mother's Day*
- May 18    Fifth Sunday of Easter
- May 25    Sixth Sunday of Easter



**SUMMER SERVICES  
WITH CANTON  
COMMUNITY BAPTIST  
CHURCH**

**Canton Community  
Baptist Church  
will host in July  
and  
we will host in August.**

*Services are at 10 a.m.*



*Dear Church Family,*

*We would like to sincerely thank you for the honor you bestowed upon us in church on Sunday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025. We are truly appreciative of your generosity and thoughtful kindness. The handwritten cards from the children and the cards, kind words, and orchids from the CE Committee were especially heartwarming and brought tears to our eyes.*

*We understand that the gift cards are from the congregation, and we deeply feel the love and gratitude that generated them. We truly enjoyed working with your children over the past four years and look forward to sharing the church experience with them and their families in the years to come.*

*We intend to continue our Happy Wanderers hikes and will certainly be involved in church life and events.*

*Blessings, always!*

*Hollace and Karen*

## Music Notes

Mary Lou Keefe, Director of Music

A few weeks ago our piano tuner was invited to speak to the members of the church council to inform them about and demonstrate to them the importance of a hydration system internally in the sanctuary piano which would help to keep it in tune. It was approved by the members and in the meantime was installed and amazingly, without tuning, it seemed to be in much better tune than before. The maintenance is easy as I have learned and also helping are Kathleen L and Walter. When a particular light goes on it's time to refresh.

A special thank you for the beautiful and very well done music performed by both the Sr. Choir and the Handbell Choir on Palm Sunday, and Easter Sunday. Also special thanks to Cindy Webb, flute, and Jon Keefe who played the drum, guitar, and various percussion instruments to back up the cantata. I had not realized that we received a standing ovation on Palm at the end of the service as I was playing the organ with my back to the congregation. Thank you so much for recognizing the talent and loyalty that we have among the choirs.

Special thank you to Kathleen Lundgren, the outgoing chair of the Music Committee and loyal participant of the Church Council meetings.

The Maundy Thursday service was beautiful and very meaningful and has always been with the deacons and the minister portraying the last supper. The choir as usual sang in front and after that the room became very dark, as never before.



**If you are able to read music and can sing  
or think you would like to be a bell ringer,  
we want YOU in the  
Senior or Handbell Choir or even both!!!**

**We will train you and you are sure to like  
the people and the experience.**



### **Plan Ahead for your May Scrip needs!**

May can be a busy month at the Scrip table. Weddings, graduations and Mother's Day are all popular May gift card giving occasions. If you have a specific card or cards you'd like to purchase in May, please plan to order by Sunday, May 4<sup>th</sup>.

**The usual cards will be available in inventory for immediate purchase during coffee hours** throughout the month, but there will be no orders placed after that date until Sunday, June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Sorry for the inconvenience and thanks as always for your support!

Casey

### **Wider Church Fellowship Events**

Our annual **Palm Sunday potluck** was well attended and hopefully no one went away hungry! Thanks to everyone who participated, enjoyed food and fellowship and brought in something to share (including our record number of hams!). We had around 75 attendees this year.

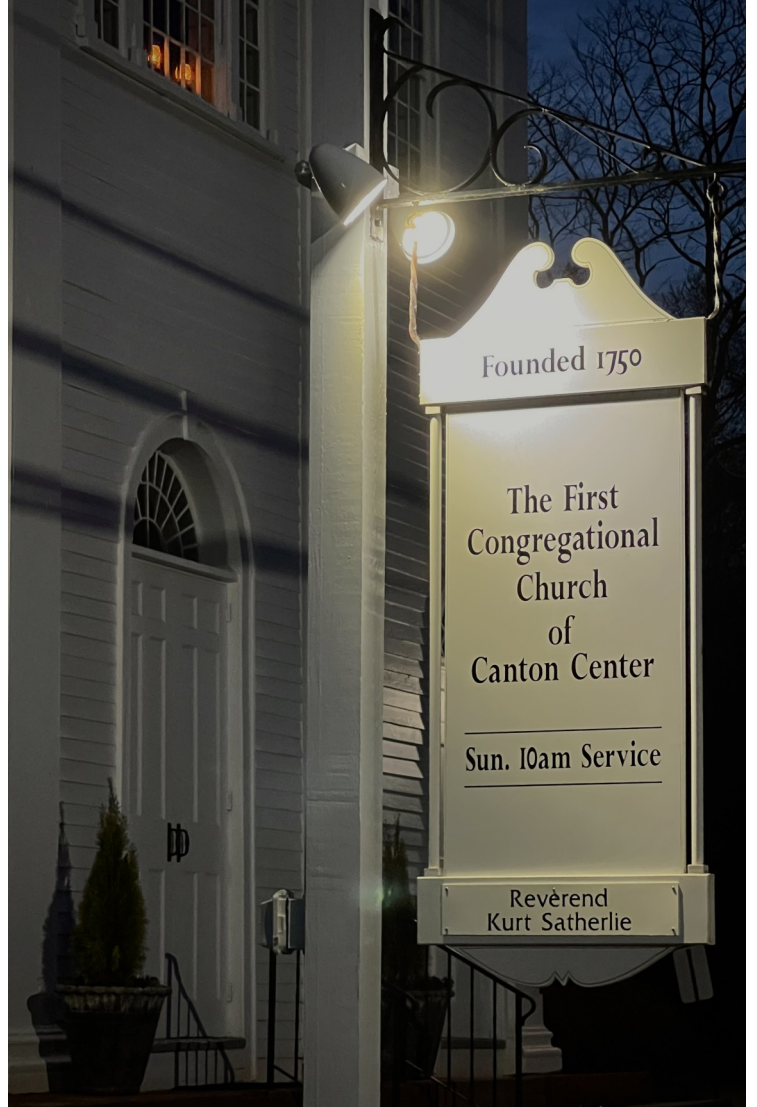
Coming up, we will have a trip to see the Hartford **Yard Goats** on Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup>. The game starts at 1:10 pm and they are hosting the Binghamton Rumble Ponies. Tickets will be \$15 each - see Linda during coffee hour to get yours!

Then June will be here before we know it, and that means one thing around here – the **Strawberry Festival!** Be on the lookout for more details, including sign-up sheets. Many hands make light work for this awesome annual event!



## ONE IF BY LAND AND TWO IF BY SEA...

Our church commemorates the 250th Anniversary of the Midnight Ride of Paul Revere!





## FAITH FORMATION NEWS

*Jody Swan, Director of Faith Formation*

Hello Canton Center Church Friends,

Spring is a time of renewal. It is refreshing to look out our windows and see the flowers blooming, trees budding and the sunshine shining bright in the sky. God is certainly doing something new & it is always exciting to witness each spring! God is also doing something new with our Youth and Children's Ministry. In the hope of growing the ministry and attracting new families to the church, help is needed. One area where help is needed is with volunteers helping each Sunday for Safe Church practices. Another area is needing volunteers to open our Nursery each Sunday. It would be ideal to have four to six volunteers so that I could create a schedule for help in the Nursery for one hour monthly, every other week or however it fits your schedule. Once I have the volunteers, we can add this information to our website and social media advertising to the surrounding community. God is doing something new at Canton Center Church. I hope you will be a part of this exciting season of renewal. Please email at [jodyswan567@gmail.com](mailto:jodyswan567@gmail.com) or see me in person.

Many blessings.

## DEACON'S BENCH

*Tim Lundgren*

The Earth is a precious place full of the wonders of nature, plants, animals, forests and the oceans full of magnificent creatures. But life on earth is in crisis. Forests are being clear cut and species driven towards extinction. The climate is heating up and sea level is rising.

What follows is some of what Scripture has to say about God's gift of the life giving Earth to us and to future generations.

Genesis 2:15 - 'The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.'

Psalm 24:1 -, The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein; for he has founded it upon the seas,

Psalm 104:24-25 - O LORD, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy creatures. Yonder is the sea, great and wide, which teems with things innumerable, living things both small and great. There go the ships, and Leviathan which thou didst form to sport in it.

Genesis 1:28 - 'God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'

Job 12:7-10 - But ask the beasts, and they will teach you; the birds of the air and they will tell you; or the plants of the earth and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In his hand is the life of every-living thing and the breath of all mankind, that the hand of the Lord has done this?'

Now that we know that the earth is in trouble, we may still have a chance to save it, if we do not delay.



Photographs of our  
Annual Palm Sunday  
Potluck Dinner on  
April 13, 2025







## SUPPORT TO OUR MINISTRIES

### May Missions Box Collection

**Missions Box:** The Missions Box collection for **May** will be **diapers and wipes** to be donated to **Gifts of Love** in Avon. These are frequently requested items that Gifts of Love has difficulty keeping stocked. Gifts of Love serves individuals and families who “face a short-term crisis in their lives due to reduced working hours, illness, divorce, death of a spouse/mate, domestic abuse, or a significant unexpected increase in expenses. They are hardworking people who simply cannot make ends meet. By assisting our clients with food, clothes, and energy assistance, we allow them to use their income on other necessities such as rent, car repairs, and medications. By helping them meet their family’s most basic needs – food on the table or a winter coat – we enable them to focus on putting their lives back in order and regaining their self-sufficiency. We are helping your neighbors.”



Thank you everyone who donated to **Holy Joe’s Café** in April! This is such a great cause, and we enjoy supporting their efforts to provide coffee to our troops and their chaplains around the world. We’ll update you on how much we collected when all the money is counted.

Just a heads up that our June and July collection will be backpacks and school supplies to be given to Wellmore. There will be more info in the next Churchmouse, but we wanted you to be able to start watching for the sales.



**Brian’s Angels:** Jody and the children involved in Faith Formation will make sandwiches for Brian’s Angels on April 27th and May 18th. The Missions Committee purchases the supplies as well as some extras to help fill bags the clients can take with them for an evening meal. The children enjoy making the sandwiches and do a great job.

The **Knitting and Crocheting Ministry** is continuing under the leadership of Rebecca Glinsman. The initial projects will be prayer shawls and lap blankets. If you would like to participate or have any other questions, please speak to Rebecca for details.



As we move into May, we’re excited to welcome Linda Kessler and Darryl Haberern to our committee. We are a busy, hard-working group that thoughtfully leads our congregation’s outreach to our communities locally, statewide, across our country, and internationally. We are very grateful for the support Canton Center Church provides to us. If you have any suggestions or questions, please feel free to talk to any one of us.

*Martha Stansel, Geri Bunnell, Debbie Poleyestewa, Casey Levine,  
Rebecca Glinsman, Carol Orlando, Darryl Haberern, and Linda Kessler*



Thanks to ALL - for a wonderful Palm Sunday Pot Luck Dinner.



### SAVE THE DATES

#### COMMUNITY TAG SALE



**The Church will be hosting an outdoor community tag sale on Saturday May 31st (rain date June 7th)**

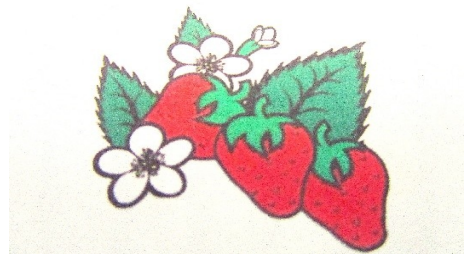
We will invite members of our congregation and the local community to bring tag sale items they'd like to sell and will provide them with spaces on the lawn along Cherry Brook Rd.

The Church will have its own space to sell donated items and also a food tent.

*Paul Stansel is coordinating this event through Bridge The Gap.*

*More information to come!*

#### STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL SUNDAY, JUNE 15, 2025



The Strawberry Festival will be held on Father's Day, June 15, 2025.

Please save the date as we will need many volunteers to have a successful event.

Last year was very successful and with your help, we can do it again.

*Please watch for sign ups.*

### 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 Church*

### Our Deepest Sympathy



*Our sympathies are extended to  
the family and friends of:*

**Elenor Smith**

who passed away on  
April 9, 2025



### Yard Goats Baseball



Yard Goats Baseball  
May 18, 2025 at 1:10 pm  
Tickets will be \$12 each.

*Please visit the Scrip table  
during coffee hour*



Please consider hosting Coffee Hour one Sunday! The coffee is provided... you can make it a family activity... all you need to bring is a quart of milk. Snacks are optional.

We thank our committees, who fill in on a monthly rotation for any Sundays when we don't have individuals or families hosting coffee hours. Our goal is not to have to tap our committees regularly for our hospitality function. Sunday coffee hours matter to all of us! Please use the sign-up sheet to take a Sunday. Thank you!

### Graduates & Families:

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



### Second Hour Safety in Houses of Worship Sunday, May 4th

Please join us for a Second Hour Power Point  
about "**Safety in Houses of Worship**".

Our presenter will be  
Canton Police Captain, Andy Schiffer.



# MAY 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1  Choir 5:30 pm Scouts 6:30 pm	2	3  AA 11:00 pm
4 Sunday Worship & Communion 10:00 am  Second Hour "Safety in Houses of Worship"	5  Book/Bible Conversation 10 am  Sr. Choir 4:30 pm Al-Anon 7:00 pm	6 Service 1:30pm @ Cherry Brook Healthcare  AA 7:00 pm	7  Deacons Meeting 7:00 pm  ACA 7:00 pm	8  Choir 5:30 pm	9	10  AA 11:00 pm
11 Worship 10:00 am  	12  Sr Choir 4:30 pm Trustee's 7 pm Al-Anon 7:00 pm	13  AA 7:00 pm	14  Council Meeting 7:00 pm ACA 7:00 pm	15  Choir 5:30 pm	16	17  AA 11:00 pm
18 Worship 10:00 am  YARD GOATS GAME	19  Sr Choir 4:30 pm Al-Anon 7:00 pm	20  AA 7:00 pm	21  ACA 7:00 pm	22  Choir 5:30 pm	23	24  AA 11:00 pm
25 Worship 10:00 am  4th Sunday Food Collection	26  Al-Anon 7:00 pm	27  AA 7:00 pm	28  ACA 7:00 pm	29  Choir 5:30 pm	30	31 COMMUNITY TAG SALE 9 - 2 pm  AA 11:00 pm



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



**THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**  
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M-F 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**Pastor**

(860)693-4207

Rev. Dr. Brenda Pelc-Faszczka  
pastor@cantoncenterchurch.org

**Organist/Director of Music:**

(860)693-4216

Mary Lou Keefe  
music@cantoncenterchurch.org

**Director of Faith Formation:**

Jody Swan  
ce@cantoncenterchurch.org

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

*We're on the Web!*

*Visit us at:*

cantoncenterchurch.org