THE CHURCHMOUSE

Newsletter of The First Congregational Church, Canton Center, CT *November 2026*



Message from the pastor…

Ephesians 5:19,20 ~Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, ALWAYS giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Gratitude, Grace, and the Gift of Community

During this month, many Americans naturally associate November with Thanksgiving. In past years, and prayerfully this year as well, let us take time to reflect on our blessings and offer heartfelt gratitude to our Creator.

A faithful and thoughtful leader, Abraham Lincoln gave our nation the Thanksgiving Proclamation of 1863. In the midst of a nation divided by civil war, Lincoln recognized that the year had nevertheless been filled with blessings and called Americans to acknowledge them "with one heart and one voice." He believed that gratitude, humility, and trust in God could help people remember what they shared in common even during difficult times.

163 years later, his words continue to speak to our nation, our communities, and our churches. Lincoln could have fixed his attention entirely on the divisions and disappointments of his day. Instead, he invited people to notice the blessings that remained and to thank God for them. His example reminds us that gratitude helps us see more clearly the blessings we have received from God.

As I count my blessings this season, I find myself especially grateful for this community of faith. Not because we are perfect, but because God continues to bring together ordinary people and accomplish beautiful things through them. I am thankful to share our worship, to serve our neighbors, and quietly care for others in Christ's name. These everyday acts of faithfulness are among God's greatest blessings.

The Farmington Valley Committee of Ministry, of which I am a member, is encouraging our thirteen churches to cultivate thankful hearts and to witness to the unity we already share in Christ. As we look for God's blessings in our midst, we often discover them in simple acts of kindness, encouragement, and care that become signs of God's grace and reminders of our shared calling in Christ.

We can thank God for the people who walk beside us in faith. We can celebrate the ways Christ continues to work through His Church. What a blessing it is when gratitude becomes not only our response to God, but also the spirit in which we live alongside one another.

As we celebrate Thanksgiving this month, may we give thanks for God's countless blessings, for the gift of this church family, and for the opportunity to share Christ's love with others. May our hearts be filled with gratitude and our lives reflect the grace we have received from God.

Blessings,

Pastor Kurt

Music Notes

Mary Lou Keefe, Director of Music

Recently, we have had two celebrations of life, the first for Marilyn Larose with song and poem during the regular church service. Jerry Alonzy sang Marilyn's favorite Hymn How Great Thou Art and a poem was read. The entire family was present that day.

On the same day coincidentally, Peggy Young, mother of Brian wished to have the choir sing How Great Thou Art which they did. The bell choir also played with a Natalie Sleeth bell adaptation of In the Bulb there is a Flower.

Days like these are sad for sure but music always has a way to lift the spirits. The following is favorite song of mine, once sung by Bill Thomas and later played as a solo on the organ.

A Lost Chord
Adelaine Anne Procter

Seated one day at the organ I was weary and ill at ease
And my fingers wandered wildly over the noisy keys
I do not know what I was playing or what I was dreaming of then
But I struck one chord of music like the sound of a great Amen.

It quieted pain and sorrow like life overcoming strife
It seemed the harmonious echo from our discordant life
I have sought but I seek it vainly that one lost chord divine
That came from the soul of the organ and entered into mine

It may be that Death's bright angel will speak in that chord again
It may be that only in Heaven I shall hear that Grand Amen.



During the month of November, youth in Church School will be learning that God knows them, loves them, and forgives them! Through, the story and songs of David, we will help the children understand that they belong to God and can always turn to Him.

"But now, O Jacob, listen to the Lord who created you. O Israel, the one who formed you says, 'Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name; you are mine.'"

♦ *Isaiah 43:1*

In one lesson, we will focus on David as he realizes the weight of his sin and cries out to God. The children will learn that when we are honest with God and asks for help, God welcomes us with love and forgiveness. Our focus point is: **We are forgiven.**

In another lesson, we will explore the song David wrote about how completely God knows us. The children will discover that God knows every part of who we are and is always present with us. Our focus point is: **We are known by God.**

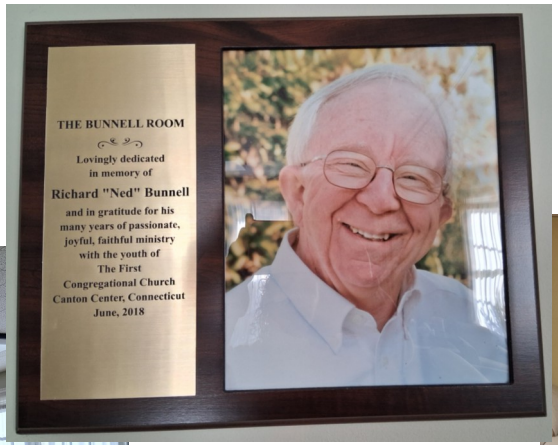
In the Godly Play Room, we will explore "10 Best Ways," a story that helps children understand God's loving guidance for living our best lives.

The Bunnell Youth Room will get a mini refresh thanks to Geri Bunnell, Art Dewey, and Dennis and Joan Noel. Geri and Art will repaint the walls, and Dennis and Joan have donated a powered air hockey table. Thank you all for your time and generosity!

~Jody Swan, Director of Faith Formation

Bunnell Room Before



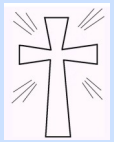


Bunnell Room After

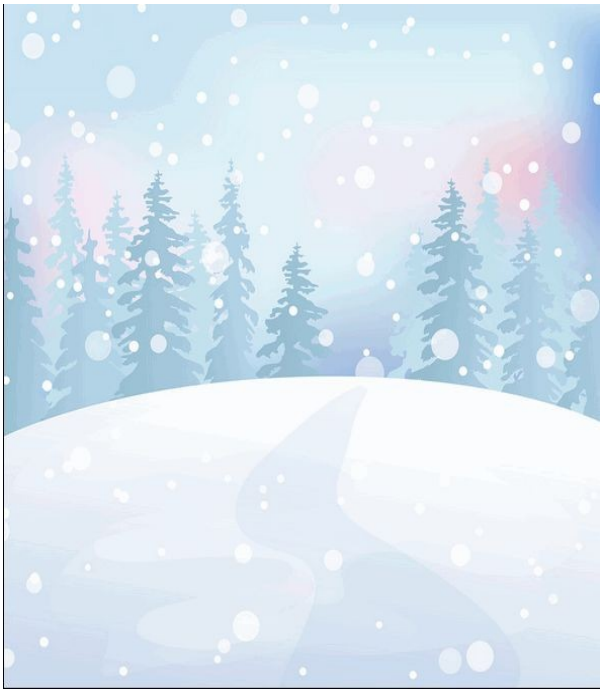


Worship Schedule ~ 10:00 am

November 1	**Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost & Communion**
November 8	**Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost**
November 15	**Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost**
November 22	**Twenty-Sixth Sunday after Pentecost**
November 29	**First Sunday of Advent**



Deacons' Bench ~ Dennis Noel



November marks the beginning of the Holiday Season and also reminds us Winter weather is just around the corner. This is a reminder to everyone at First Congregational Church Canton Center that for 2026 – 2027 the WFSB Channel 3 First Alert Network will be utilized by our church. All church delays and closings will be broadcast on Channel 3 and posted on their website www.wfsb.com. We will also update the Church telephone message and website if possible. Alerts will be posted as early as possible with safety being the first priority.

If you have questions regarding the process Paul Stansel is Senior Deacon and the primary contact for this issue.






DID YOU KNOW…. We send out "WEEKLY EMAIL REMINDERS"

If you would like to receive weekly emails about our upcoming Sunday Worship and reminders of events and happenings for the week ahead, please email the church office at office@cantoncenterchurch.org or call 860-693-4581.

The Perfect time to Scrip!



November is here! This time of year always flies by for me. The days are suddenly much shorter – and colder. It also means that Christmas will be here before we know it!

Are you someone who likes to get a jump on their Christmas shopping? Visit the Scrip table any Sunday during coffee hour or email me to get a full list of all 600+ brands available through the program. You can make your list and have time to check it more than twice! Or are you more of a "wait until it's closer" kind of shopper? No worries! Gift Cards through Scrip are always here for you! We'll be taking orders through December 13th to get physical cards in time for Christmas. Or if you are really last minute – you can order e-cards through December 22nd! If you're not in church, you can always call, text or email me (860-371-1016 or levine429@gmail.com) 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.

We're also collecting gift cards on behalf of the missions committee for both Wellmore and Canton Social Services. Last year, we donated $2,650 in gift cards that were split between these organizations. They were beyond appreciative! We'll be collecting cards again through the whole month of November. See me at the Scrip table for more details!

Wellmore Behavioral Health
Wellness for a lifetime

Canton Senior & Social Services

Scrip cards are available for over 600 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



RaiseRight™
Simply the right way to fundraise



Chicken Pie Supper & Harvest Fair















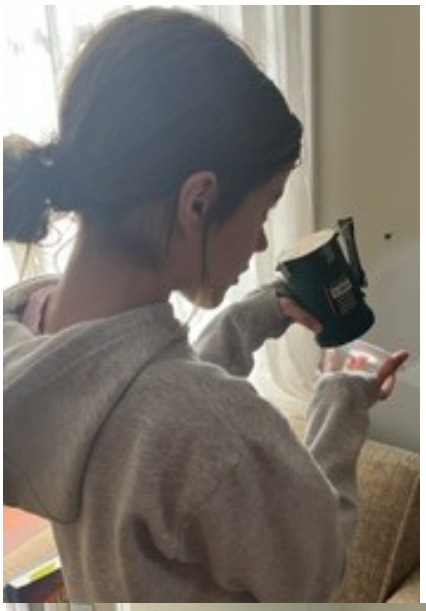




Sunday School



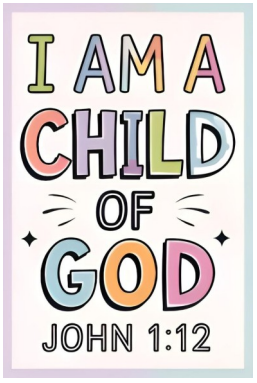


















Missions & Outreach

SPOTLIGHT ON Friendship Service Center, Inc. - November 2026

Friendship Service Center, Inc., founded in 1968, is located in New Britain, CT. Their vision is that the greater New Britain community has a safe, affordable home and episodes of hunger and homelessness are brief and non-recurring. They provide meals, emergency shelter and supportive housing.

Friendship Service Center's community outreach involves a partnership with Hope Connection Center, also in New Britain, for those who are at risk of experiencing homelessness. This partnership offers services including financial literacy, substance use recovery support, mental health, employment and supplementing resources HCC offers, such as showers and laundry.

Their SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recover (SOAR) initiative is a national program which helps increase access to the disability income benefit programs.

Friendship Service Center engages in a street outreach to connect with unsheltered individuals, hoping to create relationships and provide access to services.

And their Fresh Start Initiative (FSI) helps those exiting homelessness with furnishings, move-in assistance, apartment restoration and maintenance.

There are many ways to assist Friendship Service Center either with volunteering, a monetary donation or in-kind donations for things ranging from toiletries to small suitcases, pillows and blankets. They have an online registry with Walmart. Furniture is also accepted but takes a coordinated effort depending on their clients needs at that time.

The Missions and Outreach Committee looks forward to establishing a relationship with the Friendship Service Center and adding them to our list of non-profits we help each year.

Missions & Outreach

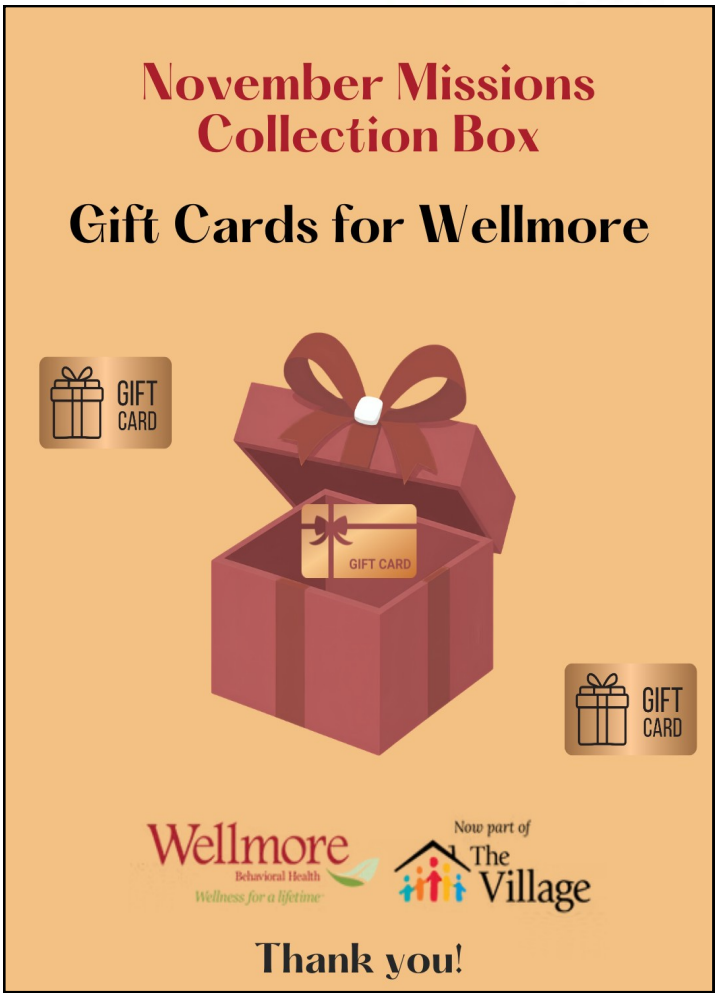
As we move toward the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays, our congregation will have several opportunities to serve others in the community that need our help. During November, we're collecting Target and Walmart gift cards for Wellmore.

These gift cards help their clients and families have a more personalized Christmas. In conversations with the social workers we support through our congregation's covenant with Wellmore, we found out that they shop with the clients and don't just hand them the gift cards. While the families shop for desired Christmas items, they also receive guidance in good shopping strategies to budget and get the most value from the cards.

The gift cards are super easy to purchase at the Scrip table. You can choose to donate specific cards, or you can donate money and Casey will figure out which cards are needed. Gift cards should be purchased by Sunday, November 29th, so our Wellmore social workers have time to distribute them to their clients.

And just a thought—maybe you have a Walmart or Target gift card that you purchased or someone gave you, but you haven't used it yet. Feel free to donate it.

Wellmore Behavioral Health
Wellness for a lifetime
Now part of The Village





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





Please join us on Saturday November 21st!

Invite your friends and family and come out to support this wonderful fair and get some holiday shopping done!



Please be sure to follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

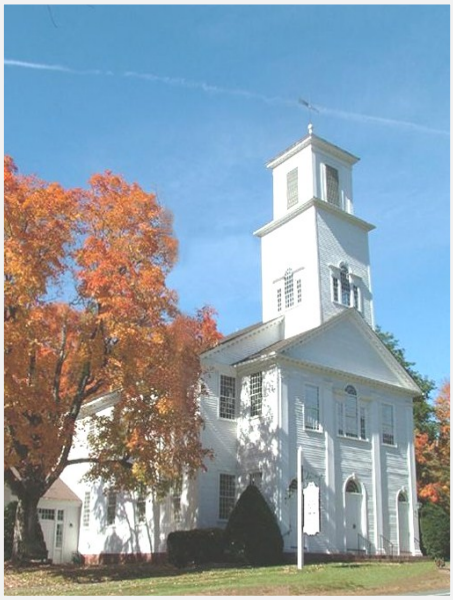


NOVEMBER 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
1 Daylight Savings - Fall Back! Sr. Choir 9am **Worship 10 am Communion**	2 Al-Anon 7:00 pm	3 AA 7:00 pm	4 **Deacons Mtg 7 pm**	5 CCCA Mtg 4pm Handbell Choir 5:30 pm Cub Scouts 6:30pm	6 Knitting 9 am 	7 AA 11:00 pm
8 Sr. Choir 9 am **Worship 10:00 am** **Long Term Member Celebration**	9 **Trustee Mtg 7 pm** Al-Anon 7:00 pm	10 AA 7:00 pm	11 **Office Closed Veterans Day** **Council Mtg 7 pm**	12 Handbell Choir 5:30 pm	13	14 AA 11:00 pm
15 Sr. Choir 9 am **Worship 10:00 am**	16 Al-Anon 7:00 pm	17 AA 7:00 pm	18 **Artisan Fair Set up**	19 **Artisan Fair Set up** Handbell Choir 5:30 pm	20 Knitting 9 am  **Artisan Fair Set up**	21 **Artisan Fair 10am - 3 pm**  AA 11:00 pm
22 Sr. Choir 9 am **Worship 10:00 am 4th Sunday Food Collection**	23 Al-Anon 7:00 pm	24 AA 7:00 pm	25	26 **Happy Thanksgiving** 	27 **Office Closed**	28 AA 11:00 pm
29 Sr. Choir 9 am **Worship 10:00 am**	30 Al-Anon 7:00 pm					

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



Worship every Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

The First Congregational Church
184 Cherry Brook Road, PO Box 133
Canton Center, CT 06020-0133
cantoncenterchurch.org

Pastor
860-693-4207
Pastor Kurt Satherlie
pastor@cantoncenterchurch.org

Office
860-693-4581
Christine Motasky
Office Manager
office@cantoncenterchurch.org
Mon.- Fri. 8:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Organist/Director of Music:
860-693-4216
Mary Lou Keefe
music@cantoncenterchurch.org

Director of Faith Formation:
Jody Swan
CE@cantoncenterchurch.org