



# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN NEW CANAAN

*Where Faith, Families & Friends Connect*

Fifth Sunday of Easter • May 2, 2021 • 10 a.m.  
178 OENOK RIDGE, NEW CANAAN, CT 06840 • 203-966-0002 • FPCNC.ORG

Please prayerfully allow the silent, sacred space of where you are,  
and the quiet stirrings of the Spirit to prepare your heart and mind for worship.

## THE GATHERING

### Prelude

*Variations on "O Fili et Filiae"*

Jeanne Demessieux

### \*Call to Worship

Courtney Steininger

Leader: We are branches, connected to the vine of Christ.

People: **We come because we seek to abide in Christ.**

Leader: The branches that abide in the vine bear much fruit.

People: **We come because we long to be spiritually vibrant, alive, productive.**

Leader: Even if it means being pruned and cut back.

People: **We come because we strive to be fruitful followers of Jesus.**

Leader: If we abide in Christ, then Christ's words will abide in us.

People: **We come because we strive to be faithful disciples.**

Leader: We gather for worship now to the glory of the One God:  
Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer.

People: **May we grow abundantly as God tends us lovingly.**

\*PLEASE STAND IN BODY AND/OR SPIRIT.

If you are attending worship in-person, please hum the hymns with your mask on.

**\*Hymn**

*God is Here!*  
(Please OMIT verse 2)

ABBOT'S LEIGH

1 God is here! As we your peo - ple meet to  
2 Here are sym - bols to re - mind us of our  
3 Here our chil - dren find a wel - come in the  
4 Lord of all, of church and king - dom, in an

of - fer praise and prayer, may we find in  
life - long need of grace; here are ta - ble,  
Shep - herd's flock and fold; here as bread and  
age of change and doubt keep us faith - ful

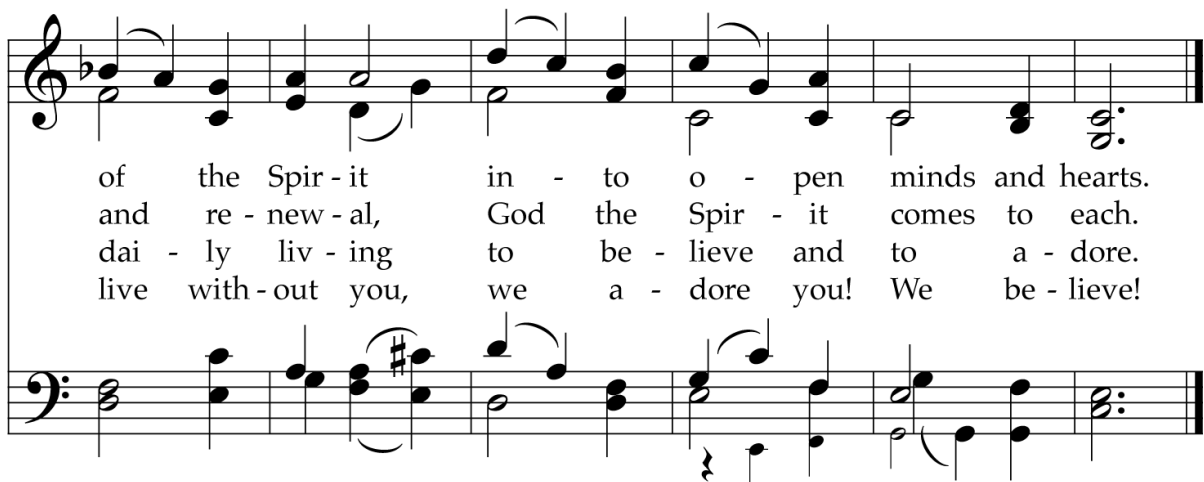
full - er mea - sure what it is in Christ we share.  
font, and pul - pit; here the cross has cen - tral place.  
wine are tak - en, Christ sus - tains us as of old.  
to the gos - pel; help us work your pur - pose out.



Here, as in the world a - round us, all our  
 Here in hon - es - ty of preach - ing, here in  
 Here the ser - vants of the Ser - vant seek in  
 Here, in this day's ded - i - ca - tion, all we



var - ied skills and arts wait the com - ing  
 si - lence, as in speech, here, in new - ness  
 wor - ship to ex - plore what it means in  
 have to give, re - ceive: we, who can - not



of the Spir - it in - to o - pen minds and hearts.  
 and re - new - al, God the Spir - it comes to each.  
 dai - ly liv - ing to be - lieve and to a - dore.  
 live with - out you, we a - dore you! We be - lieve!

**\*Invitation to Confession**

Sherry Tate

Leader: Jesus said: *"I am the vine, you are the branches."* Thankful that Jesus is the true vine and that we are by grace grafted into the Crucified Risen Christ, we dare to be pruned of anything that keeps us from abiding and being fruitful in Christ. Let us pray, first together and then in silence...

**\*Confession of Sin**

People: Loving God, we confess that all is not well with us. Please forgive us for neglecting to draw deeply on the Vine of Life; for our tendency to wander instead of growing on the framework you provide; for being content, and sometimes even proud of, a few sparse or undersized fruits; for the apathy which lets us to go through some seasons without bearing any fruit. Have mercy on us. Please do not lose patience or sever us completely. Rather in the Power of your Spirit, heal our diseases, discipline and train our wandering tendrils, and prune our unfruitful branches. May we abide in Christ and he in us, through all the changing seasons of life. Let us delight in bearing the fruits of love which are our true purpose and joy...

*Silent Confession...*

Leader: In Jesus' name we pray.

People: Amen.

**\*Assurance of Pardon**

Leader: Jesus said: "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will and it shall be done for you." Friends, we ask for forgiveness and renewal, and it has been truly done for us. It is being done for us. And it will be done for us.

People: Thanks be to God!

**\*Passing of the Peace**

Leader: The risen Christ's first words to his disciples were, "Peace be with you." This is the gift he gives to all his followers. May the peace of Christ be with you all.

People: And also with you.

*(Please greet one another with a sign of the peace of Christ.)*

**Children's Blessing**

Courtney Steininger

## THE WORD

### Unison Prayer For Illumination

Sherry Tate

**God who speaks our existence into being with a Word, thank you that we are like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers. Speak again and enliven us. Amen.**

### First Lesson – I John 4:7-21

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

### Second Lesson – John 15:1-8:

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

Minister: Holy wisdom, holy word.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

"Abiding in Christ"

The Rev. Scott Herr

## RESPONDING TO THE WORD

### **Presentation of Tithes, Offerings and Ourselves**

Sherry Tate

#### **Offertory**

*My Master hath a Garden*

Randall Thompson

My Master hath a garden  
Full-filled with diverse flowers,  
Where thou may'st gather posies gay  
All times and hours.  
Where nought is heard but paradise bird,  
Harp, dulcimer and lute,  
With cymbal and timbrel,  
And the gentle sounding flute.

O Jesus, Lord, my heal and weal,  
My bliss complete,  
Make thou my heart thy garden plot,  
True, fair and neat,  
That I may hear this music clear,  
Harp, dulcimer and lute,  
With cymbal and timbrel,  
And the gentle sounding flute.

## THE EUCHARIST

### **Invitation to The Lord's Table**

Courtney Steininger

### **Great Prayer of Thanksgiving**

The Rev. Scott Herr

Minister: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

**People: We lift them to the Lord.**

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People: It is right to give our thanks and praise...**

### **Lord's Prayer (unison)**

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.

### **Breaking the Bread**

*The words of institution are spoken here.*

### **Prayer after Communion (unison)**

God of the harvest, Master Vine Tender, thank you for welcoming us to your table where the grain of the field and the grape of the vine is freely shared. You place us at the center, feed us, equip us and, having provided for us, look to a different harvest; a fruitfulness of lives in service to you and others. God of generous provision, feed us, prune us, harvest us, that our lives might bring an abundance of love for you and all people; In Christ, through Christ, with Christ, and for Christ we pray. Amen.

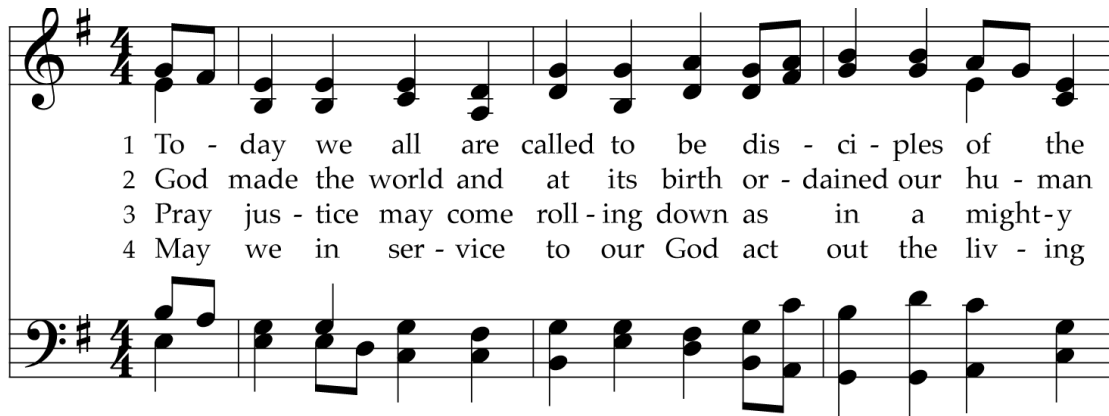
If you are attending worship in-person, please hum the hymns with your mask on.

### SENDING

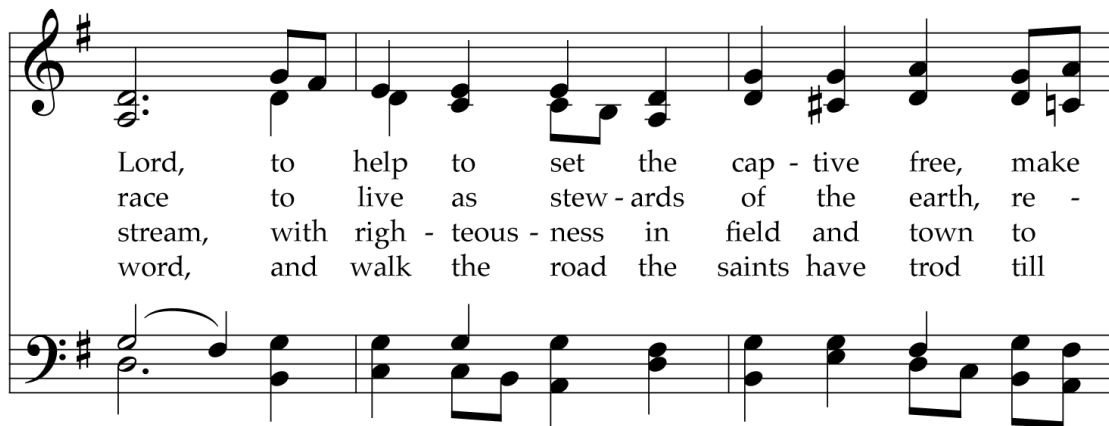
\*Hymn

*Today We Are Called to Be Disciples*

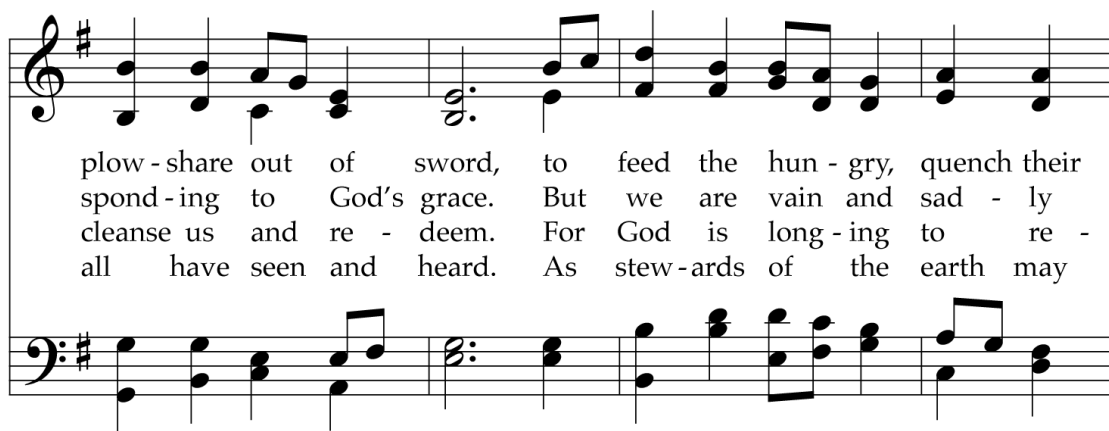
KINGSFOLD



1 To - day we all are called to be dis - ci - ples of the  
2 God made the world and at its birth or - dained our hu - man  
3 Pray jus - tice may come roll - ing down as in a might-y  
4 May we in ser - vice to our God act out the liv - ing



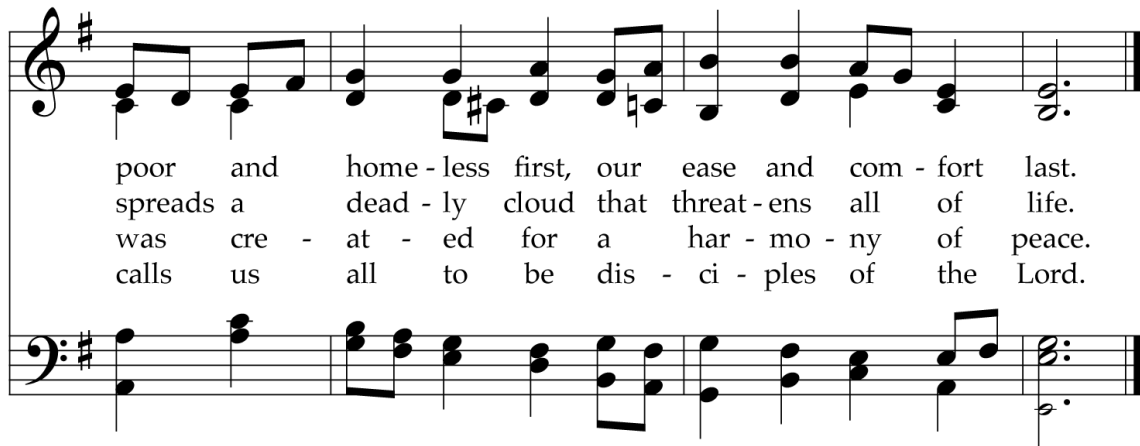
Lord, to help to set the cap - tive free, make  
race to live as stew - ards of the earth, re -  
stream, with righ - teous - ness in field and town to  
word, and walk the road the saints have trod till



plow - share out of sword, to feed the hun - gry, quench their  
spond - ing to God's grace. But we are vain and sad - ly  
cleanse us and re - deem. For God is long - ing to re -  
all have seen and heard. As stew - ards of the earth may



thirst, make love and peace our fast, to serve the  
 proud; we sow not peace but strife. Our dis - cord  
 store an earth where con - flicts cease, a world that  
 we give thanks in one ac - cord to God who



poor and home - less first, our ease and com - fort last.  
 spreads a dead - ly cloud that threat - ens all of life.  
 was cre - at - ed for a har - mo - ny of peace.  
 calls us all to be dis - ci - ples of the Lord.

**\*Charge and Benediction**

The Rev. Scott Herr

### Ring of the Church Bell

**A Special Called Meeting of the Congregation** will be held following the worship service, via Zoom. The purpose of this meeting is to present the 2021 Operating Budget, and act on the report of the Nominating Committee.

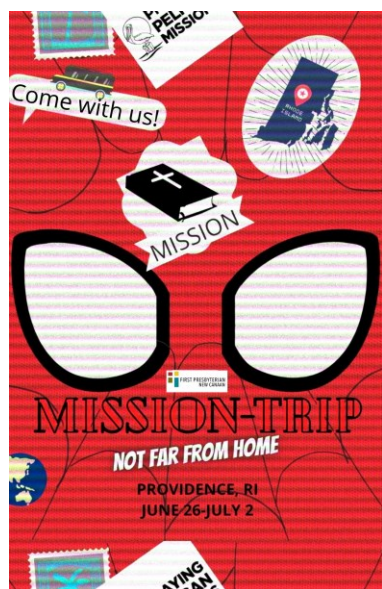
[Click here](#) for the Special Called Meeting of the Congregation's Agenda. [Click here](#) for a copy of the Officer Nominations for the Class of 2022 and the Class of 2024 nominees for elders and deacons, and the Class of 2022 nominees for Nominating Committee.

CCLI #11412435 / ONE LICENSE, License A-734274



**Welcome to worship on this Fifth Sunday of Easter.** Today Scott will be preaching through the lectionary texts of I John 4:7-21 and John 15:1-8 to reflect on how engaging Easter new life is contingent on “abiding in Christ,” and maintaining not just religious rituals, but renewing relationships with God and one another.

**Children’s worship** is for elementary school-aged children during the sermon portion of the in-person worship service. Our Director of Youth and Children’s Ministry, Courtney, will take the kids to the common room to discuss “The Vine and the Branches.” They will be returned to their parents for the Prayers of the People. Also, note that childcare is provided for the entirety of the service for all children under the age of 5. **Our zoom Sunday School** lesson will be offered online as usual at 11:30. Our lesson this Sunday is called “Growing in Grace.” We will discuss what it means when we say that the Lord is the vine, and we are the branches. Parents, remember that on Saturday, you will receive an email that will include discussion questions for your family about our weekly theme and big questions, as well as the instructions for our Sunday School craft! **The Sunday School Bulletin is Here!** [Click here](#) to download the children's bulletin: The Vine and the Branches. [Click here](#) for the Zoom link (Passcode is Joy!). There will be a waiting room to be accepted to the meeting. A gentle reminder: to avoid zoom bombing, please identify yourself clearly as you are coming into the meeting.



**High School Mission Trip to Providence, RI • June 26-July 2, 2021.** We are getting ready for a super fantastic mission trip this summer! **ALL MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION, OF ALL AGES, ARE INVITED ON OUR TRIP** beginning the afternoon of June 26 for Providence, Rhode Island. We will be returning home by the evening of July 2nd. We will be helping a congregation with their Vacation Bible School (which will be superhero-themed) and doing various service projects for them. Youth, their friends from school, and adults are able to sign up for the trip NOW. Please do not hesitate to reach out to [courtney@fpcnc.org](mailto:courtney@fpcnc.org) with questions!

**Fun Fridays at First Pres- July 9th – August 13th  
3:30-5pm**

For parents of children aged 3-9. Through July and part of August, First Presbyterian Church will be hosting "Fun Fridays" from 3:00 pm to 5:30 pm for children ages 3 through 9. This FREE program



is an opportunity to drop off your kids for a couple of hours while you grocery shop, grab a cup of coffee with your friends, or just enjoy a couple of hours to yourself! Our programming will be predominantly non-religious, with some spirituality sprinkled in. We are modifying the Abundant Life Garden Project curriculum, so each week we will move through the themes of Water, Soil, Seeds, Animals, Harvest, and Celebration, while providing the kids with a craft and activity based on the lesson. Certainly, the themes build on each other, but participation each week is not required. There will also be music opportunities, outside games, and a snack that will be served! Please register your kids at the following link: <https://forms.gle/zg84FprLJCD2Lute9>.



## **Handbell Rehearsals Resume Wednesday, May 5<sup>th</sup> • 3:00-4:00 pm**



Now that many of us have received our COVID-19 vaccine, we will be resuming handbell rehearsals once again! Rehearsals will be in the sanctuary and socially distanced at ringing stations. If you can read music, you are welcome to join! Email Victoria Shields at [victoria@fpcnc.org](mailto:victoria@fpcnc.org) if you are interested!

**Musical Musings is now off for the summer! We will resume with a new music-themed class in the fall.  
Thank you to all who have joined us online in this crazy year!**

~~~~~

### **FPC Facebook Thursday Concerts And Friends of Music**

Check out our weekly FPC Facebook Concerts  
at [www.facebook.com/FPCNC](https://www.facebook.com/FPCNC)

Our recent concerts are fundraisers for the Friends of Music! Our recent concerts, “At the Labyrinth: Music for Lent and Eastertide” and “A Concert for Earth Day”, as well as this week’s concert, are to showcase the breadth of music FPC has been sharing with the community since the beginning of Covid-19 to help lift our spirits in this crazy time. If you haven’t done so already, check out our weekly concerts and consider making a donation to the Friends of Music! You may send a check to FPC with Friends of Music in the memo line, or you may make a donation online on the church website at [www.fpcnc.org](http://www.fpcnc.org), and click on the **RED** donate button. Remember to indicate Friends of Music in the notes to be sure your donation is credited. Continue to tune in weekly for more music, share the concerts with friends, and keep an eye out for in-person outdoor concerts coming in June!



## **Pianist, Andrew Armstrong returns to First Pres!**

**Saturday, May 22nd from 5:30-6:30**

**The Rain date is Sunday, May 23rd from 4:00-5:00**

**The concert is outdoors on the church circle!**



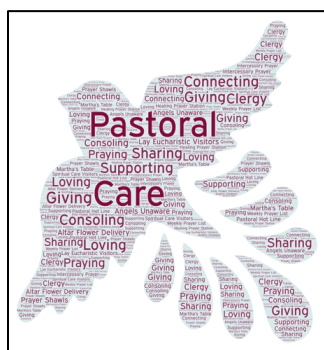
Bring lawn chairs, a cooler with picnic dinner and wine, whatever you can dream up, bring your kids without worrying every time they squirm or fidget. Along with violinist [Jennifer Frautschi](http://www.rebrand.ly/NCCMtickets), violist, [Gabriela Diaz](http://www.rebrand.ly/NCCMtickets), and cellist Edward Arron, they offer shorter selections from Beethoven, Amy Beach, Rebecca Clarke, William Grant Still, and Antonin Dvorak. This will be a ticketed event, so hurry to <http://www.rebrand.ly/NCCMtickets> and get your tickets now!

**FPCNC Men's Fellowship – 1st and 3rd Wednesdays.** FPCNC's Men's Fellowship is a great opportunity for the men to get to know each other a little better and do some bible study together. It is held twice a month from 7 to 8 am, on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays. **At our next meeting on Wednesday, May 5, Rev. Scott Herr will lead us in a discussion on "What does 'Engaging Easter New Life' look like for you?"** All men are welcome and feel free to invite any friends.

**The Women's Ministry Gathering meets again on Wednesday, May 5 from 4-5:30 pm.** All FPC women and friends are invited to our monthly gathering (online during COVID; in-person eventually!). Welcome, prayer, and a short talk by **Courtney Steinger about her faith journey** -- will be followed by discussion and virtual fellowship. We hope you can join us!

**Please consider volunteering to help with our Sunday service.** All of us need each other here at First Presbyterian of New Canaan. Please consider sharing your time and talent with us on a Sunday morning to greet those attending (and you might meet a lot of people you don't know!), usher those attending, carry the cross into worship, or read short sections of liturgy or the chosen scripture for the day. Come forward and let us know you better! Here is where you can review the needs of the congregation for the worship experience: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0b4aaaad2aa31-sunday>.

**Listening Assist System:** For people now attending in-person services at FPC, we have a new Listening Assist system for those needing hearing or listening assistance. The new devices are located on the table at the rear center of the Sanctuary in front of the stained-glass windows. The receiving devices are in a new charging station and the ear-pieces are in a basket on the table. If you need assistance with the device, please ask an usher.



Part of our church's mission statement says that we are to love inclusively. To that end, the **Pastoral Care Team** was formed to provide pastoral care to church members who are facing a life crisis. They may be in declining health, shut-ins, living in a care facility, grieving, or struggling with a significant change in their circumstances. Sometimes, however, there are members with needs of which the Team is unaware. If you know of someone who could benefit from a friendly phone call or visit or if you have questions about the work of the Team, please call the church office, 203-966-0002. Your Pastoral Care Team—Evelyn Bergstrom, Peg Bull, Ted Foster, Linda Martin, Anne Palmer and Rev. Mary Thies—is here for you.

**Please keep the following people in your hearts. *Continued concerns:*** Tim and Kate Albert (friends of the Holden family); Catherine Armstrong; Frank Banko; Gloria Bridgman; John Edwards; Mary Bolling Hoffman; Denise Lynch; Debbie Murphy Williams; The Abo Noktah family (our Syrian refugees): father Khaldoun, mother Khawla Alzob, daughters Hanin, Zain and Hayat, and sons Yaman and Ahmed, and Khaldoun's mother, Nam Abo Noktah.



**Let's Talk About It New Canaan** is a website that provides *behavioral health resources* for the citizens of New Canaan. Behavioral health is the scientific study of the emotions, behaviors, and biology relating to a person's mental well-being, ability to function in everyday life, and concept of self. This is an excellent resource for you and your neighbors, friends, and colleagues at school and at the office (online or in-person colleagues). Please take a moment to browse the "Let's Talk About It" website to discover various resources for promoting the health of our community: <https://letstalkaboutitnc.org>. Or see the promotional video at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W1d5PEm\\_rpM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W1d5PEm_rpM) Special thanks to Dede Bartlett, a member of FPCNC who has been working with The NCCF Behavioral Health Partners over the past few years to provide a website with resources for the larger community.

**THIS WEEK at FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of NEW CANAAN**

**SUNDAY, MAY 2**

**10 a.m. Worship Service via LocalLive  
and in-person**  
The Rev. Dr. R. Scott Herr preaching  
**10:15 a.m. Children's Worship in Common Room**  
**11 a.m. Special Called Meeting of the  
Congregation**  
**11:15 a.m. Coffee Hour, via Zoom**  
**11:30 a.m. Adult Ed and Sunday School, via Zoom**

**TUESDAY, MAY 4**

**10 a.m. Leadership Team, via Zoom**  
**8 p.m. Men's A.A. Group**

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 5**

**7 a.m. Men's Fellowship, via Zoom**  
**2 p.m. English Handbell Choir**  
**4 p.m. Women's Ministry Gathering, via Zoom**

**THURSDAY, MAY 6**

**3:30 p.m. Confirmation Class, via Zoom**  
**6 p.m. Facebook Live Concert**

**SATURDAY, MAY 8**

**9 a.m. Goodwill Truck in Parking Lot**  
**9:15 a.m. A.A. Group (closed)**  
**10:15 a.m. A.A. Group (open)**  
**5 p.m. Mom's Night out**

**SUNDAY, MAY 9**

**10 a.m. Worship Service via LocalLive  
and in-person**  
The Rev. Dr. R. Scott Herr preaching  
Sacrament of Baptism  
**10:15 a.m. Children's Worship in Common Room**  
**11 a.m. Coffee Hour, via Zoom**  
**11:30 a.m. Adult Ed and Sunday School, via Zoom**

**Participating in today's service:**

**Soloist:** Lisa Flanagan

**Greeter:** Megan Wunderlich

**Ushers:** Janet and John Lanaway

**Lay Reader:** Sherry Tate

**Communion Officers:** Steve and Jen Van de Graaf

**MINISTERS**

The Entire Congregation

**OUR PASTORS**

The Rev. Dr. R. Scott Herr, Senior Pastor • The Rev. Mary Marple Thies, Parish Associate

**OUR STAFF**

Victoria Shields, Director of Music and Arts • Sherry Tate, Cherub Choir Director

Courtney Steininger, Director of Youth and Children Ministries

Jim Riehl, Interim Church Administrator • Tina St. Armand, Office Manager

Kate Stringfellow, Operations Manager