



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN NEW CANAAN

Where Faith, Families & Friends Connect

Transfiguration Sunday • February 15, 2026 • 10:00am
178 OENOKE RIDGE, NEW CANAAN, CT 06840 • 203-966-0002 • FPCNC.ORG

Grace and peace to you, and welcome!

As you prepare for Worship, please sign the red welcome pad found at the center of each aisle so that we will know you worshipped with us. Then pass it to your neighbor. The last person to sign the pad should pass it back to the center of the aisle. We suggest you prayerfully allow the silent, sacred space of where you are, and the quiet stirrings of the Holy Spirit to prepare your heart and mind for Worship.

**PLEASE STAND IN BODY AND/OR SPIRIT.*

THE GATHERING

Prelude: Mode de ré (from *Eight Modal Pieces*) Jean Langlais

***Call to Worship (from Psalm 99)** The Rev. Mary Marple Thies

Leader: Our God is holy and mighty, a leader who loves justice,
All: **who established honesty, justice, and righteousness.**
Leader: God has done this! We exalt you, O God!
All: **We worship at your footstool. You are holy!**
Leader: Miriam, Moses and Aaron were among them, and Samuel, too
All: **was among those who invoked the Name;**
they called on you, and you answered them.
Leader: We exalt you, O Lord our God,
All: **and we worship you at your holy mountain;**
for you, O God, are holy!

***Hymn No. 165:** O Wondrous Sight, O Vision Fair *Deo gracias*

1 O won - drous sight, O vi - sion fair
2 From age to age the tale de - clare,
3 The law and proph - ets there have place,
4 With shin - ing face and bright ar - ray
5 And faith - ful hearts are raised on high

of glo - ry that the church shall share,
 how with the three dis - ci - ples there,
 two cho - sen wit - ness - es of grace;
 Christ deigns to man - i - fest to - day
 by this great vi - sion's mys - ter - y,

 which Christ up - on the moun - tain shows,
 where Mo - ses and E - li - jah meet,
 the Fa - ther's voice from out the cloud
 what glo - ry shall be theirs a - bove
 for which in joy - ful strains we raise

 where bright - er than the sun he glows!
 the Lord holds con - verse high and sweet.
 pro - claims his on - ly Son a - loud.
 who joy in God with per - fect love.
 the voice of prayer, the hymn of praise.

Welcome and Announcements

The Rev. Scott Herr

Blessing for our Younger Disciples

Leah Saulsberry

Call to Confession

Steve Van de Graaf

Leader: We don't have to look very far to see the brokenness of our world: broken relationships, broken systems, broken nations, broken people. We are tired. We are worn. And we know that the world didn't get this way on its own. So, together, let us confess our part in the brokenness of things, and ask for God's help to repair and restore.

Confession of Sin (unison)

Steve Van de Graaf

God of radiant light, we confess that we are a people who are sometimes too comfortable dwelling in darkness. We say we want things to change, that we do not accept the way things are. But, in reality, we want someone else to take care of the changing. We resist transformation and sometimes do not even believe it is possible. Forgive our unbelief. Soften our hearts toward one another and ourselves. May your Spirit move through and among us. Make us light bearers for your sake, and for the sake of your people. Amen.

(silence for further individual reflection and repentance...)

Leader: In Jesus' name we pray.

All: Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Steve Van de Graaf

Leader: The good news is this: while we do not always – or perhaps often – get it right, God is faithful. God keeps God's promises. Let this truth seep deep down into your soul:

All: **In Jesus Christ we are forgiven and set free for life in the Spirit of God!**

***Gloria Patri (No. 580)**

Gloria Patri (Scottish)

**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.**

***Passing of the Peace**

Steve Van de Graaf

Leader: We are overshadowed by the bright cloud of God's love in Christ. May the peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Please share Christ's peace with one another.

THE WORD

Prayer for illumination (unison)

Steve Van de Graaf

Holy Wisdom, your Word is at once ancient and brand new. As we read together this day, enlighten our hearts and minds. May we be transformed. In Jesus' name. Amen.

First Lesson – Exodus 24:12-18

Steve Van de Graaf

¹²The LORD said to Moses, 'Come up to me on the mountain, and wait there; and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction.' ¹³So Moses set out with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. ¹⁴To the elders he had said, 'Wait here for us, until we come to you again; for Aaron and Hur are with you; whoever has a dispute may go to them.' ¹⁵Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. ¹⁶The glory of the LORD settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the cloud. ¹⁷Now the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. ¹⁸Moses entered the cloud, and went up on the mountain. Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Anthem:

Prayer for Transfiguration Day

John Weaver

O God, in the glorious transfiguration of Christ, your Son, you have confirmed the mystery of the faith by the testimony of the apostles. In the voice that came from the bright cloud you proclaimed him to be your Son, and told us to heed his teachings. O God, make us heirs with Christ, in his glory forevermore, Alleluia. Amen.

FP CNC Choir

Second Lesson – Matthew 17:1-9

The Rev. Mary Marple Thies

¹Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. ²And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. ³Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. ⁴Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' ⁵While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!' ⁶When the disciples heard this,

they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. ⁷But Jesus came and touched them, saying, 'Get up and do not be afraid.' ⁸And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone. ⁹As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, 'Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.'

Leader: Holy wisdom, holy word.
All: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Get Up and Do Not Be Afraid

The Rev. Scott Herr

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Affirmation of Faith – Hymn No. 191: We Have Come at Christ's Own Bidding

Brewer



1 We have come at Christ's own bidding to this high and
2 Light breaks through our clouds and shad-ows; splen-dor bathes the
3 Strength-en-ed by this glimpse of glo - ry, fear - ful lest our
ho - ly place, where we wait with hope and long - ing
flesh - joined Word; Mo - ses and E - li - jah mar - vel
faith de - cline, we like Pe - ter find it tempt-ing
for some to - ken of God's grace. Here we pray for new as -
as the heaven-ly voice is heard. Eyes and hearts be - hold with
to re - main and build a shrine. But true wor - ship gives us
sur - ance that our faith is not in vain, search - ing like those
won - der how the law and proph - ets meet: Christ, with gar - ments
cour - age to pro - claim what we pro - fess, that our dai - ly
first dis - ci - ples for a sign both clear and plain.
drenched in bright - ness, stands trans - fig - ured and com - plete.
lives may prove us peo - ple of the God we bless.

Prayers of the People

The Rev. Mary Marple Thies

The 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

Call for the Offering

The Rev. Mary Marple Thies

Leader: We are created in the image of a generous God, and we participate in God's generosity when we share of what we have with one another. Not because we have to, but because we are grateful, let us also be generous through our tithes and our offerings here, but also through our daily thoughts, words, and actions...

Offertory Anthem:

The Gift of Love

Hal H. Hopson

Though I may speak with bravest fire, and have the gift to all inspire,
And have not love; my words are vain, as sounding brass, and hopeless gain.

Though I may give all I possess, and striving so my love profess,
But not be giv'n by love within, the profit soon turns strangely thin.

Come, spirit, come, our hearts control. Our spirits long to be made whole.
Let inward love guide every deed. By this we worship and are freed. Amen.

(text is a paraphrase of *1 Corinthians: 13*)

FPCNC Choir

*Doxology (No. 606)

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

Old Hundredth

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication (unison)

Steve Van de Graaf

Gracious and holy God, we give you thanks for the many gifts in our lives. We are well and truly blessed. Help us to resist the fear of "not enough." Multiply what we offer beyond our imagining, that others might experience your love and grace, your mercy and justice. May we come to know a world where each person is enough and has enough. These things we ask boldly in Christ's name. Amen.

SENDING

*Hymn No. 193:

Jesus, Take Us to the Mountain

Unser Herrscher

1 Je - sus, take us to the moun - tain, where, with Pe - ter,
2 What do you want us to see there, that your close com -
3 What do you want us to hear there, that your dear dis -
4 Take us to that oth - er moun - tain where we see you
5 We who have be - held your glo - ry, ris - en and as -

James, and John, we are daz - zled by your glo - ry,
 pan - ions saw? Your di - vin - i - ty re - vealed there
 ci - ples heard? Once a - gain the voice from heav - en
 glo - ri - fied, where you shout - ed "It is fin - ished!"
 cend - ed Lord, can - not help but tell the sto - ry,

light as blind - ing as the sun. There pre - pare us
 fills us with the self - same awe. Clothed in flesh like
 says of the In - car - nate Word, "Lis - ten, lis - ten,
 where for all the world you died. Hear the stunned cen -
 all that we have seen and heard; say with Pe - ter,

for the night by the vi - sion of that sight.
 ours you go, matched to meet our dead - liest foe.
 ev - ery - one: this is my be - lov - ed Son."
 tur - i - on: "Tru - ly this was God's own Son!"
 James, and John: "You are God's be - lov - ed Son!"

***Benediction**

The Rev. Scott Herr

***Choral Amen**

***Ringing of the Church Bell**

***Postlude:**

Mode de si (from *Eight Modal Pieces*)

Jean Langlais

TODAY IN WORSHIP

Welcome to worship on this Sunday when we celebrate the Transfiguration of Jesus. It was a singular event up there on the mountain that day, and the disciples saw a glimpse of Jesus' divine glory, but also received clear instructions about the importance of listening to Jesus. We will focus today through our lectionary texts on how Jesus touches his disciples and commands them to "Get up and do not be afraid." What does spiritual transformation look like? What does change look like? What does "spiritual refreshment and social reorientation" look like for us today? We are glad you are joining us for worship today, and experiencing the grace of God's welcome and experience spiritual refreshment and social reorientation!

Sunday School! Join us as we explore Bible stories and all our questions about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and the world around us. We will explore these themes through discussion, crafts, music, and other visual media. Children begin worship in the Sanctuary with their families then following the Blessing for Young Disciples, we move to our Sunday School classes upstairs in the Bliss House and then return to the Sanctuary towards the end of worship.

If your child is participating in Sunday School, please fill out this very short form so that we have up-to-date family contact numbers, and you can provide us with any information about your child that will help us minister to them: <https://fpcnc.breezechms.com/form/2024SundaySchoolStudents>

Adults or older teens who want to come be part of the fun of Sunday School, we need you! Join us and bring your own sense of wonder and joy as we learn together what it means to be part of God's big family. Let us know of your interest by filling out this form: <https://fpcnc.breezechms.com/form/Teachers2024-25>, or reach out to Leah Saulsberry at leahs@fpcnc.org.

Children are warmly welcome to stay in Worship! For children who stay during worship, the **Pray-Ground** can be found in the area in front of the back pew bench. The Pray-Ground is a designated place in the Sanctuary where young children can experience worship through age-appropriate worship materials and tools that will help keep them engaged in what is happening. We will continue to rotate books and coloring materials on an ongoing basis. Although it can seem counter-intuitive to adults, children are often able to process what they hear more effectively when they have something to do with their hands.

Any child worshipping in the Pray-Ground should bring their grown-up with them to the Pray-Ground. Including young children in worship can sometimes feel a little daunting, especially on days when they're feeling a little extra fidgety, but we don't need to be discouraged from keeping children in the Sanctuary. There are many important things that children learn while in worship, even when we're not sure if they're paying attention. Young children learn by observing the adults around them. Children acquire the "language" of worship by listening to and observing the words the adults around them say, much like how they learn their native tongue. Quite simply, children learn to worship by regularly being in Worship. **So families with little ones should feel free to worship together in the Pray-Ground!**

FPCNC also offers childcare during our Sunday Service provided by Saturnina Greaves and Lizz Reyes from Wee Care Nanny Agency. Our Nursery is located just off our Common Room vestibule down the long hall from the Sanctuary and is available between the hours of 8:45–11:30am. **Parental and guardian sign-in is required and we do ask that you pick up your child promptly after the Service.**

Have a prayer request? Prayer Cards are located in the back of the church adjacent to the Sanctuary entrance. Before worship, please give the completed Prayer Card to either Scott, Mary or one of the Ushers. These requests will be included in our Prayers of the People for that Sunday. You will have the option to exclude your prayer from the communal prayer if you prefer. All prayers will be held and prayed over in confidence. Any questions or concerns, please contact Mary (marythies75@gmail.com).

TODAY IN WORSHIP (Cont'd)

Cents-Ability – The Cents-ability jar is in the hallway on the way to the Common Room. Please drop your spare change into the jar either on the way to Coffee Hour or whenever you're at church. You can also take home a small cents-ability bank to collect change. All change collected will be donated to the New Canaan Food Pantry. Thank you for your continued support to the New Canaan Food Pantry.



SIGN UP to Read, Usher or Greet here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0b4aaaad2aa31-sunday>

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram:  	DONATE: 	PPCNC YouTube Channel: 
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ABOUT TODAY'S MUSIC

This morning, our organ music is composed by **Jean François-Hyacinthe Langlais III** (1907-1991), a French composer of modern classical music, organist, and improviser. He described himself as "Breton, de foi Catholique" ("Breton, of Catholic faith"). Langlais became blind due to glaucoma when he was only two years old and was sent to the Institut National des Jeunes Aveugles (National Institute for Blind Children) in Paris, where he began to study the organ with André Marchal. From there he progressed to the Paris Conservatoire, obtaining prizes in organ and studying composition with Marcel Dupré and Paul Dukas. He also studied improvisation with Charles Tournemire. After graduating, Langlais returned to the National Institute for Blind Children to teach, and also taught at the Schola Cantorum in Paris from 1961 to 1976. Many of his students went on to become important musicians, including organists and composers. It was as an organist that Langlais made his name, following in the footsteps of César Franck and Charles Tournemire as Organiste Titulaire at the Basilica of Sainte-Clotilde in Paris in 1945, a post in which he remained until 1988. As well, he was much in demand as a concert organist. The position of organist at Sainte-Clotilde was succeeded to by Jacques Taddei.

Our FPCNC Choir's first anthem is composed by my teacher, **John Borland Weaver** (1937-2021). He began music studies at age six at Peabody Conservatory of Music, Baltimore, Maryland. At age 14 he began to study organ with Richard Ross and George Markey. Soon thereafter, he became organist of a church in Baltimore and played his first organ recital. John Weaver earned his undergraduate degree from the Curtis Institute of Music, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he was a student of Alexander McCurdy. After two years in the Army as Organist and Choir Director of the Post Chapel at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York, he earned a Master of Sacred Music Degree from Union Theological Seminary, New York, New York, where he studied organ with Robert Baker and composition with Joseph Goodman. Weaver taught at Curtis, serving as Chair of the Organ Department between 1972 and 2003, and also taught at Union Theological Seminary, Westminster Choir College, and the Manhattan School of Music. He was Chair of the Organ Department of The Juilliard School from 1987 until 2004. In 1959 John Weaver was appointed Organist and Choir Director for Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, New York, New York. There he met his future wife, Marianne, a flautist and choir member. They would establish the Bach Vespers series at Holy Trinity in 1968, the first series in the United States where Bach cantatas were performed in liturgical context. John Weaver left Holy Trinity Church in 1970 to become Music Director at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, remaining until 2005. Among his many activities, he directed the St. Andrew Chorale in major works with orchestra.

As a nod to Valentine's Day, our choir sings offertory music composed by **Hal H. Hopson** (1933-2025), an American composer and church musician. He had over 3000 published works, which comprise almost every musical form in church music. With a special interest in congregational song, he continued to make a significant contribution to the new repertoire of hymn tunes and responsorial psalm settings as evidenced by the proliferation of his settings that are included in newly published hymnals and psalm collections. Hopson was active as a conductor and clinician, having conducted choral festivals and workshops. He had loved music and composing since childhood.

Did you know...

This past Wednesday, our electrician Kieran O'Connell and I were joined by a technician from Verdin Clocks and Bells, and our Tower Bell operating system was upgraded. The last time work was done was in 1997, and components of the striking mechanism of the bell were reaching life expectancy and needed attention. (The Verdin Company did the initial work

on our bell and subsequent upgrade.) In order to upgrade, new wiring and cable was required. This process began some months ago with the purchase of the wire and cable needed to replace what existed. Kieran worked over many weeks, crawling around the building to install the new material. The bell's operating system now resides inside the Women's Changing Room/Music Library. The completed work will ensure many, many years of continued operation of our bell. We will now hear, along with our peal every Sunday morning at the conclusion of Worship, a more somber tolling feature for funerals and memorial services. As well, our bells will now chime every day at 12:00pm – except Sunday – and every day at 6:00pm. It is my hope that anyone present during these times will pause for a moment to enjoy this wonderful instrument.



TODAY

Souper Bowl of Caring* Last Sunday was another successful afternoon in the fight against hunger. Over 30 folks enjoyed fellowship over a bowl of soup (along with chips & crackers) while even more pints were purchased to-go! We've raised \$1,054 (and still counting) for The Food Bank of Lower Fairfield. *If you missed it, don't worry! We made enough soup to freeze and sell today. Just come to the Common Room after Worship. Suggested donation for each pint is \$5.... while supplies last or if you don't want any soup you can still donate to "Tackle Hunger".*



Many thanks to our amazing soup chefs who made and donated 10 different recipes for this event: Peg Bull, Chris Bondor, Lisa Gifford, Kristie Godina, Cynthia Graziano, Jan Lucie, Wendy Starr, Sherry Tate, Mary Thies and Catherine Walker. Thanks also to Lisa Flanagan for making and decorating 4 dozen football cookies, and to our other servers/helpers: Chris Cluett, Terence D. Flanagan, Ashley Godina, Mike Godina, Thomas Godina, Leah Saulsberry, Kate Stringfellow, and Patty and Stephan von Jena.

REMINDER: if you brought in a crockpot or containers, please stop by the kitchen to take them home.

**About TACKLE HUNGER: Home of the Souper Bowl of Caring. Tackle Hunger's signature Souper Bowl of Caring effort is a youth-inspired movement working across the nation to tackle hunger in their local communities. Mobilizing grassroots resources including churches, schools, civic groups and caring individuals, Tackle Hunger and the Souper Bowl of Caring movement has created over \$175 million worth of support that stays completely local to make sure no one goes without soup in their bowl.*

THIS WEEK @ FPC

FPC Office Hours:

Monday, February 16: PRESIDENTS' DAY – OFFICE CLOSED

Tuesday, February 17 – Friday, February 20: 9:00am – 5:00pm

If you have any Pastoral Care needs or need to stop by the office, please reach out to Wendy in the Church office (203-966-0002 x1).

Wednesday Weekly Bible Studies, led by Darlene Harmon, meets **every Wednesday from 10:00am-11:30am**.

We are currently studying King Solomon and Proverbs. Please come at 9:45am to share a cup of tea/coffee and snack in the Parlor/Library. We hope you can come join us! Everyone is invited!

NEXT SUNDAY

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22
in the Common Room immediately following the 10:00am Worship Service.

Grab some coffee/tea and lunch before meeting starts. Childcare will also be provided.

An Agenda, 2025 Annual Report, 2025 Annual Meeting Minutes and other documents will be provided for everyone at the meeting. To review these documents online beforehand, check the Tidings email that was sent on February 13.

All are welcome! We hope you can all stay for our Annual Meeting and lunch!

If you'd like a hard copy of any of the documents listed above before the meeting, contact Wendy in the Church Office (203-966-0002 ext 1 or wendy@fpcnc.org).

STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN 2026

2026 Stewardship Update:

The 2026 Stewardship Campaign has concluded. We are thrilled to report that we raised \$926,000! Exceeding our campaign goal of \$920,000. Much of the success of the final weeks of the campaign is due to the Pledge Match Challenge which was offered by two generous donors. The Challenge raised over \$140,000 during the final five weeks of the Campaign.

The Stewardship team wants to thank everyone in the Congregation who has contributed or pledged since the start of the Stewardship Campaign in November. The overall participation has been great. Everyone should be proud of our combined support for First Presbyterian!

Even though the Campaign is officially over, if you have not yet pledged for 2026, you can still do so. There are pledge cards at the back of the Sanctuary, and you can also pledge online at <https://fpcnc.org/pledges>. Or contact Wendy in the Church office.

Thank you and Blessings from the Stewardship Team

THIS MONTH



A Century of Black History Commemorations - From Negro History Week to Black History Month

2026 marks 100 years of national Black history commemorations, honoring the vision of Dr. Carter G. Woodson and the founders of the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH), now ASALH. In 1926, Dr. Carter G. Woodson launched Negro History Week, creating a movement that transformed how America and the world recognize the

contributions of people of African descent. What began as a week-long observance has grown into Black History Month, a cornerstone of American and global culture. For its 100th theme, ASALH invites the world to reflect on the power of remembrance and how Black history commemorations have transformed identity, inspired progress, and preserved truth against erasure. From the Haitian Revolution and Juneteenth to today's cultural landmarks, these observances remind us that to understand the modern world, one must understand Black history. As the nation also approaches the 250th Anniversary of U.S. Independence, ASALH calls for a continued commitment to telling an inclusive and accurate history, especially amid efforts to erase it. A legacy that began in 1926 continues today. Learn more about the theme: <https://asalh.org/black-history-themes/>

LENT AT FPC

The Lenten season is here! We will mark the beginning of Lent with an Ash Wednesday Worship Service at 12:00pm this Wednesday, February 18. Join us for a Service of readings, reflection, prayers, music and the imposition of ashes at noon, as we enter this season of preparation for Easter. This year, our theme is *Finding the Way*... Each Sunday, in addition to the lectionary texts, we will be using a kind of spiritual "compass" to help you discover the way of Jesus along your life's faith pilgrimage. On each of the five weeks leading up to Holy Week, we will reflect on one of the five questions:

- 1) "Does it give life, or take life away?"
- 2) "Does it expand your world, or shrink it?"
- 3) "Does it lead you more deeply into mystery and paradox, or black and white reality?"
- 4) "Does it set you free to give yourself away to something bigger than yourself, or enslave you to the fear of 'not enough'?" and finally,
- 5) "Does it bring joy, or despair?"

The purpose of Lent, after all, is to lead us into new life! And hopefully along with the biblical lessons, these questions will help us find our way to the new life God intends for us and all people.

You are also welcome to pick up Lenten devotionals, One Hour of Sharing coin fish banks for your children to help save, and brown bags/grocery items for food pantry donations. We will also be setting up the Labyrinth in the Sanctuary for you to experience prayer using the Labyrinth.

LENT AT FPC (Cont'd)

Lenten devotional booklets are here – for individuals or families! Please take a copy or share one with a friend.

40-DAY "LOVE BUILDS UP" FAMILY CHALLENGE



40-Day "Love Builds Up" Family Challenge

For each of the six weeks of Lent, spend some time at the beginning of the week (Sunday night, maybe?) reading the Bible passage together. Talk as a family about that week's topic, using the conversation prompts included in this devotional if that helps. Commit to taking on an action or practice from that week, then just watch as the Realm of God fills, strengthens, and beautifies your house and the world!

Wendell Berry and the Sabbath Poetry of Lent

The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they break forth into singing.
(Isaiah 14:7)

The word "Lent" comes from an old English word for "lengthen," and refers to the lengthening days of spring. Anticipating Easter, the church prepares with forty days of fasting and reflection, the better to celebrate the great feast when it comes. The word "sabbath" comes from an old Hebrew word for "to stop," and refers to pausing secondary activities (like work) to clear space for the primary ones (like relationships, delight, study, freedom, beauty, restoration – and resurrection). The poet Wendell Berry calls "the idea of sabbath...as rich and demanding an idea as any I know" – and over the decades, Berry has devoted many Sundays to writing "sabbath poems" that explore the depths of this rich, demanding idea. In this Lenten devotional, biblical texts walk hand-in-hand with Berry's sabbath vision of the natural world, and together they suggest simple, accessible practices you can try yourself, with your family or friends, or with your congregation.



Action and Contemplation for Lent... The Sanctuary will be open for members starting Wednesday, February 18 (Mon-Fri from 9:00am-5:00pm) who want to spend time for prayer and meditation, using the Labyrinth or if you simply want to enjoy some quiet time sitting in the Sanctuary, you are welcome. This is a great opportunity to bring your food donations for the New Canaan Food Pantry, to pray for ourselves and our larger community. We believe prayer and service go together.

Instructions for the Labyrinth are posted or you can reach out to Scott or the church office for guidelines. The Labyrinth is designed to lead one into private meditation via following the intricate path that takes

us to the center. It's not a maze, but a purposeful passage that may be entered into with gentle song, prayer, or quiet meditation. We ask that you remove your street shoes, so please wear socks or bring your slippers from home.

LENT AT FPC (Cont'd)

During the season of Lent (February 18 – March 29), our congregation collects a special offering for **One Great Hour of Sharing.** Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The work done in support of the causes supported by One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) — disaster, hunger, poverty, climate change, and immigration/migration and refugees — serves individuals and communities in need. This work provides people with safety, sustenance, and hope. This Offering helps to improve the lives of people in these challenging situations.

To donate online, use the QR code located in the bulletin insert, in the below photo OR the envelope included in your bulletin or they are also available at the Usher's table throughout the season of Lent.



PDS 12138-26101



Text **OGHS** to **91999** to support these vital ministries, or visit pcusa.org/oghs.





FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
NEW CANAAN



Come Join Us! Holy Week Services

Ash Wednesday
Service

February 18, 12:00pm

Palm Sunday Service

March 29, 10:00am

Maundy Thursday
Service

April 2, 7:00pm

Good Friday Community
Service @ Lutheran Church

April 3, 6:00pm

Easter Sunday
Sunrise Service

April 5, 7:00am

Easter Sunday
Breakfast

April 5, 8:00am

Easter Sunday Service

April 5, 10:00am

Easter Egg
Hunt

April 5, 11:30am

All Are Welcome!

178 Oenoke Ridge, New Canaan, CT
www.fpcnc.org 203-966-0002 ext. 1

LENT AT FPC (Cont'd)



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
NEW CANAAN

ANNUAL LENTEN FOOD DRIVE

Share the Spirit of Giving during Lent
Live Our Mission!

Bring your donated items to Church
throughout Lent starting on
ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18TH –
PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 29TH

New Canaan Food Pantry suggested items needed:

- Non-Refrigerated Milk (Parmalat, Horizon, etc.)
- Pancake Mix (Complete)
- Cereal & Oatmeal (Small Tub or Box)
- Baking Items: Baking Mix, Oil, Flour, Olive Oil
- Crackers, Peanut Butter, Jelly, Taco Kits, and Hamburger Helper
- Canned Goods: Vegetables, Fruit, Pasta Sauce, Soup, Tuna, Chicken, Stew
- Ground Coffee (Regular & Decaf) & Tea
- Household: Toilet Paper, Paper Towels, Dish Soap, All-Purpose Cleaners
- Personal Care: Shampoo/Conditioner, Deodorant, Body Wash, Mouth Wash, Razors, Shaving Cream

Monetary donations always accepted and can be mailed to
Human Services at: 77 Main St, New Canaan CT 06840.
Please make checks payable to the "New Canaan Food Pantry".



Grab a bag with list of items from back of Church.
Bags donated by Walter Stewart's.

SAVE THE DATE



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN
NEW CANAAN

FPCNC: Open Mic Night Schedule

You are invited to an evening to share music and/or poetry!

26

FEB

February Open Mic Night

Featured Performer: Glenn Roth

26

MAR

March Open Mic Night

Featured Performer: Shawn Taylor

23

APRIL

April Open Mic Night

Featured Performer: Anne Marie Menta Trio

28

MAY

May Open Mic Night

Featured Performer: Steve Rodgers

Open Mic, 7-8:30 pm

Featured Performance, 8:30-9 pm

Day of sign-ups welcome 7-8 pm

Contact Nick Depuy at nickdepuy@site@gmail.com
to sign up and for more information

178 Oenoke Ridge, New Canaan CT



SAVE THE DATE (Cont'd)

Welcome Visitors! We are delighted to welcome you to our Worship Service today – and every Sunday! First Presbyterian Church of New Canaan is a welcoming, worshipping, learning, celebrating, caring, giving, and serving community, reflecting the inclusive love of God, and nurturing each person's spiritual journey.



If you are interested in learning about joining our Church community, we invite you to participate in our upcoming Membership Events:

- **Sunday, March 8th** – Membership Orientation after Worship (We will discuss “who we are,” “what we believe,” “how we live out our faith” and “what First Presbyterian is about”. Lunch and childcare will be provided.)
- **Sunday, March 22nd** – New Members Welcomed at Worship

If you'd like to know more about Membership, please contact Membership Elder Barb Achenbaum at 203-273-6908 or barbachenbaum@gmail.com.

Calling all Lads and Lassies to join the 2026 Scottish Heritage Committee to help organize this year's Scottish Sunday, planned for Sunday, May 3, 2026.

Scottish Sunday is one of the highlights of our church year - and we need your help to make it happen! This much-anticipated annual Service brings our Presbyterian cultural heritage and celebration into our church. It's a day filled with memorable worship, fabulous music, joyful dance, and excellent food and libations!

Joining the committee is a wonderful way to contribute to the life of our church in a hands-on, enjoyable way. It's a chance to help sustain a tradition that brings distinction to the church, strengthens fellowship, and creates an experience people talk about long after the last toast and bagpipe tune.

If you enjoy working with others, value tradition, and like being part of something truly special, we would love to have you on this year's committee (and you don't need to be Scottish to join the fun!) We encourage and respectfully ask all our former committee members to re-engage with us this year, as well as new joiners with new energy and new ideas. All are welcome! We promise a good time will be had by all!



Please let Patty von Jena / Nancy LaBadie, or Wendy know in the office if you would like to join the committee.



MISSION & OUTREACH

Community Service Project

Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) Food Packing Event for Young Families and Congregants of all ages

**Saturday, March 7 from 9:00–11:00am
at the New Canaan High School**

RSVP's are required by February 27. Interested? Please reach out to Nancy LaBadie nancydlabadi@gmail.com or Wendy wendy@fpcnc.org so we can secure our participation numbers. Ages 5+ can volunteer!

Feeding kids. Feeding spirits. Empowering communities.

Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) is a Christian nonprofit whose mission is to "feed God's starving children hungry in body and spirit". We will help hand-pack nutritionally complete meals which will be distributed through partner organizations to reach malnourished children.

This is a simple and impactful family-friendly activity and system to combat hunger with food, faith and hope, one meal at a time.



focused on
hunger prevention
and social services
for a better life

We have renewed our commitment to **New Covenant Center** to purchase, prepare and serve dinner six times in

2026 at their Stamford facility. **These are scheduled for the 1st Saturday of March, April, May, Sept, Oct and Nov in 2026. Still needed for March 7 — 2-3 Cooks and Servers.** Mark your calendars and reserve your spot now for shopping, cooking and/or serving! For more information, please reach out to Steve Van de Graaf or Wendy in the church office. Sign up Here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0A44A5AE28A7FF2-newcovenant>



EDITOR'S NOTES

Update – Sip, Savor and Share: A good time was had by all last Thursday as we chatted away while sharing delicious coffee and treats! Everyone went home with a Valentine bouquet to enjoy and inspire hope for an early Spring! Hope to see you at the next Congregational Life event.



EDITOR'S NOTES (Cont'd)



Adult Forum Recordings

To watch previous Adult Forums, you can check out our YouTube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCN6ar2AUqiXmUnDmAPG61KA>.

We recently posted videos on our YouTube channel of the last 2 Adult Forum talks:

- January 11, 2026 (Greg Cootsona – <https://youtu.be/apdP3KK5H1A>)
- February 1, 2026 (Georgette Bennett – <https://youtu.be/-ATbhqCZDLc>)

Recent SCAM emails

You might have received an email from Scott explaining about a recent email scam or directly from scammers asking for you to respond with a conversation or help getting gift cards, etc. Please note that the FPC staff will ONLY use our church email (i.e. scott@fpcnc.org, terry@fpcnc.org, iriehl@fpcnc.org, leahs@fpcnc.org or wendy@fpcnc.org) to communicate with you. We will NEVER solicit money or gift cards from you. Correspondence from any other email is a SCAM and should be deleted.

The online scammers are getting very crafty and sophisticated in their trickery. Please take time to always check the sender email (@fpcnc.org) and, no matter what the content of the email, if it is not from the church address (@fpcnc.org), bad actors are using our identities to trick you and commit fraud.

If you receive something that you think is from one of the FPC Staffers and looks suspicious, please do not hesitate to call the office to clarify the email content/email address. *Thank you from the FPC Staff*

INCLEMENT WEATHER 2026 SEASON

It's that time of year when we need to be cautious about driving in bad weather. The Church Office will follow the NC Public Schools regarding any delays or closures. We will try to update our website in a timely manner to notify everyone of office closures or you can view the NCPS website at: <https://www.ncps-k12.org/page/school-closings-delays-and-early-dismissals> If bad weather occurs on a Sunday, please watch for an email from the church with details or check out our website www.fpcnc.org. REMINDER: Please refer to the [Emergency Preparedness Guidelines](#) document and if you haven't already, please sign up with the town for alert messages here https://www.newcanaan.info/online_services/emergency_call_out_system/index.php.

The town of New Canaan Human Services maintains a vulnerable resident outreach registry. In the event of a town-wide emergency, Human Services staff will contact those residents wishing to receive a wellness call. If you are a NC resident 65+ and/or homebound/disabled and would like to have your name added to the Registry, go to https://www.newcanaan.info/departments/human_services/index.php. Follow the directions there or call Marcella Rand, the Adult and Senior Services Coordinator, 203-594-3083.



News from the Worship, Music and Fine Arts Committee

As we move through the winter season, please consider helping with our worship. We need ushers, greeters and readers to lead us in joyful celebration. Please consider logging into the **Sign-Up Genius** found on the church website (www.fpcnc.org) to find a Sunday that works for you. To find out more about how you can help, please speak with Jan Lucie, Linda Martin or Armin Thies of the Worship Committee or call Wendy in the church office.

Or **SIGN UP to Read, Usher or Greet here:**

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0b4aaaad2aa31-sunday>

We are grateful for all your participation.

CONCERTS @ FPC

Sunday, February 22 at 3:00pm – you won't want to miss it!

Orchestra Lumos presents *The Best of All Possible Winds*

A special program to celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America

Join us on February 22 in the Sanctuary after morning Worship and our Annual Meeting/lunch to hear some of the finest woodwind players in the area – flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon and horn! An exciting program celebrating America and its 250 years features works by **Leonard Bernstein, William Grant Still, Charles Ives, Amy Beach, John Philip Sousa, and more.** In addition, you will have the opportunity to hear our Aeolian-Skinner pipe organ solo and with the woodwinds.



COMMUNITY



JOURNEY TO FREEDOM
HUMAN TRAFFICKING
IN CONNECTICUT
FAIRFIELD REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Bringing together 100+ churches and organizations

21 February 2026

8:15-9:15 am - Registration & Breakfast
9:15 am- 12:30 pm - Conference

Walnut Hill Community Church
Location:
156 Walnut Hill Road
Bethel, CT 06801

HUMAN TRAFFICKING 101
PANEL DISCUSSION with survivors and advocates
WHAT'S MY ROLE?

To Register [Scan here](#) 
[Or Click Here](#)

For more information: contact@theundergroundne.org



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN NEW CANAAN

Winter Coat Drive



Midnight Run - Donations Needed

Let's support the Congregational church as they collect items for their upcoming Midnight Run on February 28.

Please donate winter coats, sweaters, and sweatshirts (L or XL, men's and women's), as well as new T-shirts, underwear (L or XL), and/or heavy socks. A donation box is located at the back of the FPC Sanctuary until Tuesday, February 24.

Your donations are appreciated and will be most welcome during this harsh winter. Any Questions, please reach out to Steve Van de Graaf or Wendy in the Church Office.

178 Oenoke Ridge, New Canaan, CT
www.fpcnc.org 203-966-0002 ext. 1



THE SONO COLLECTION

TEEN MOVIE Night



FRIDAY
February 27, 5-7:30pm



FREE ENTRY

THE SONO COLLECTION
LEVEL 2, NEAR BLOOMINGDALE'S
100 N. WATER ST. NORWALK, CT 06854

Free food, prizes, & the chance to connect with local organizations that serve teens, so register today!

SCAN HERE 

COMMUNITY (Cont'd)



Waveny Lifecare Network's

NAVIGATOR

Alzheimer's and Dementia at Home for New Canaan

Providing support and guidance
to those impacted by Alzheimer's
and dementia in New Canaan

All Communications Confidential

- 24/7 access to dedicated Alzheimer's and dementia specialists
- Complimentary grant-based program
- Exclusive respite apartment
- Exclusive social model adult day programming
- Expedited access to Waveny's continuum
- Access to trusted resources outside of Waveny
- Wellness checks and safety assessments
- Education on disease progression and healthcare resources available
- Assistance with insurance and public benefits
- Coordination of care, advance care planning, discharge planning
- Emotional support
- Alzheimer's and dementia caregiver support group
- Dedicated mobile app

Contact us for a consultation
Phone: 203-594-5289
Email: Navigator@waveny.org

In collaboration with



NEW CANAAN
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

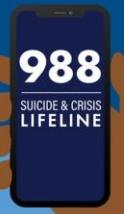
**Domestic violence doesn't take a break
for the holidays.**



If you or someone you know needs help, call DVCC's 24-hour hotline at 203.588.9097 or visit the website at DVCCCT.org for more information.

**SAVE THE NUMBER
SAVE A LIFE
CALL OR TEXT 988**

Add this number to your phone now.
It could save a life later.



nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention

Save the number, save a life. Add the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988) to your phone now—it could save a life later. Trained crisis counselors are available to talk 24/7/365.

NEW CANAAN

Behavioral Health

ALLIANCE

Finding the right behavioral health support for yourself, family member or a friend can feel overwhelming. The New Canaan Behavioral Health Alliance (NCBHA) is excited to announce the launch of its website. New Canaan Human Services, NCCF and Silver Hill Hospital have partnered with over 30 local agencies and organizations to encourage, develop and support a greater community awareness of behavioral health issues and resources in our area. To talk directly to someone that can help navigate available resources, or just to see what behavioral health events are happening around the area, visit www.newcanaanbha.org.

PRAYERS AND CONCERNS

Please keep the following people in your hearts.

Continued prayers and concerns: Ferial Aldag, recovering from knee replacement surgery; Kevin Bedford (Mark Magnusen's friend); Judy Bentley; Mary Dillon (Barbara Wentzel's sister) who had a stroke; Betty Drew (Sue Dishart's mother); for Kristen Englund (baptized and confirmed at FPC) who underwent successful transplant surgery; Chris Harris (Dede Trefts' lifelong and beloved friend) is in the last stage of a very long battle with cancer; Dan Hodges; Sue Hoffman (Peg and Sherm Bull's friend) diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer; David Johnson (Elisabeth Johnson's son); Anne Kniffin; healing prayers for Denise Lynch; Sarah, James and Rowan Marcotte (Jen Van de Graaf's sister and family); Josephine Markell (Jim Riehl's 106-year-old aunt); Missy (Sarah Robinson's sister-in-law) and her two daughters, Lexi and Maggie. Missy has been diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer; Sandy Nissley; Howard Palmer; for the family and friends of Viv Palmer (Maxine's cousin) who is in hospice care; John Robinson (Darlene Harmon's brother) who has lung cancer; Nancy Russell (Linda Martin's sister); Mindy Starr-Pfahler (Wendy Starr's cousin); Ken Stringfellow (Kate Stringfellow-Ziance's brother); J. Stuart Stringfellow (Kate Stringfellow-Ziance's father); Homero Villareal; and the Abo Noktah family (the Syrian family FPCNC sponsored): father Khaldoun, mother Khawla Alzob, daughters Hanin, Zain and Hayat, and sons Yaman and Ahmed, and Khaldoun's mother, Nam Abo Noktah.

We continue to pray for the families and friends of the victims who have been affected by gun violence.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is our presence around the world when disasters happen. Through them we are on the ground around the world, responding to the enormous needs following wildfires, hurricanes and earthquakes and during war. PDA Giving: <https://pcusa.org/giving/stewardship-funds-development/ways-give>

PSNE Community Prayer: For Barrington Presbyterian Church, its Members, Session, Seekers, and the Community of Barrington, RI

GROW IN FAITH

 **SILVER HILL HOSPITAL** If you know of someone in urgent need of mental health support, please remember the resource that our town has in the New Canaan Urgent Assessment Program. The town, in partnership with Silver Hill Hospital, is prepared to offer psychiatric assessment and tailored referral for ongoing care. The Program serves children, teens and adults who are New Canaan residents free of charge. To schedule an intake call, email NCUA@silverhillhospital.org or call Silver Hill Hospital admissions at 1-866-542-4455 and indicate that you are asking about the New Canaan Urgent Assessment Program. For more details use this link: <https://silverhillhospital.org/new-canaan-urgent-assessment-program/>

Pastoral Care Team:

Do you know of someone who might appreciate a phone call or visit, someone who is lonely or mourning? Our congregation has a team of people who are ready to reach out 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. Our Pastoral Care Team, made up of Ferial Aldag, Peg Bull, Debera Prosek, Ellen Sisson, Barbara Wentzel and The Rev. Mary Thies, is ready to provide pastoral care to church members who are dealing with such a situation. If you know of someone who could benefit from this ministry or if you have questions about the work of the team, please call the church office 203-966-0002 (ext 1).



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of NEW CANAAN

CALENDAR – UPCOMING WEEK

SUNDAY, February 15

9 am Music Rehearsals
10 am Worship Service
11:30 am Coffee Hour & Selling Leftover Soups

MONDAY, February 16

PRESIDENTS' DAY - OFFICE CLOSED
3:30, 4:30 Jumpin' Jams (Tate Barn)
7 pm Purple Heather Dancers

TUESDAY, February 17

9:30, 10:30, 11:30 Jumpin' Jams (Tate Barn)
10:30 am Staff Leadering Weekly Meeting
8 pm Men's A.A. Group (closed)

WEDNESDAY, February 18

10:00 am Weekly Bible Study
12 pm Ash Wednesday Service
4:30 pm FPC English Handbells Rehearsal

THURSDAY, February 19

3:30 pm Special Church
7 pm FPC Choir Rehearsal (Choir Room)

FRIDAY, February 20

7:30 am A.A. Group
9:30, 10:30, 11:30, 3:30, 4:30 Jumpin' Jams (Tate Barn)

SATURDAY, February 21

9:15 am A.A. Group (closed)
10:30 am A.A. Group (open)

SUNDAY, February 22

9 am Music Rehearsals
10 am Worship Service
11:15 am Coffee Hour
11:30 am Annual Meeting of the Congregation/Lunch
3 pm Orchestra Lumos Concert

CALENDAR – FEBRUARY thru APRIL

Thursday, Feb 26, 7:00pm

Open Mic Night

Saturday, Mar 7, 9:00-11:00am

Service Project: Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) Food Packing Event

Saturday, Mar 7, 2:00-6:00pm

New Covenant Center (Pres and Serve Meals)

Sunday, Mar 8, 11:30am

New Member Orientation Class

Sunday, Mar 8, 4:00pm

Charis Chamber Voices Concert

Sunday, Mar 22, 10:00am

New Member Reception

Thursday, Mar 26, 7:00pm

Open Mic Night

Sunday, Mar 29, 10:00am

Palm Sunday Service

Thursday, Apr 2, 7:00pm

Maundy Thursday Service (Communion)

Friday, Apr 3, 6:00pm

Good Friday Community Service (@ New Canaan Lutheran Church)

Saturday, Apr 4, 2:00-6:00pm

New Covenant Center (Pres and Serve Meals)

Sunday, Apr 5

Easter Sunday

7:00am Sunrise Service (followed by breakfast)

10:00am Sunday Service (followed by Easter Egg Hunt)

THOSE PARTICIPATING IN TODAY'S SERVICE:

The First Presbyterian Church Choir

with:

Lisa Flanagan – soprano, Nancy Rathbun – alto, Nikolas Brannan – tenor, Devon Mitchell – bass

Greeters: Sue Sherwood and Barbara Wentzel

Lay Reader: Steve Van de Graaf

Ushers: Mark Chmiel and Stephan von Jena

Cross Bearer: Stephan von Jena

Today's Coffee Hour Preparers/Servers: Deacons (Sue Benko and Carole Clarkson)

MINISTERS

The Entire Congregation

OUR PASTORS

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

2025-2026 SESSION ELDERS AND DEACONS

SESSION ELDERS

Bob Spangler and Jennifer Van de Graaf (Co-Clerks) • Barb Achenbaum • Tom Butterworth • Jim Ely
Angela Johnson • Nancy LaBadie • Janet Lanaway • Jan Lucie • Mark Magnusen • Bonnie Peterson
Mike Peterson • Charlie Sulkowski (Youth) • Steve Van de Graaf • Patty von Jena • Stephan von Jena

DEACONS

Dan Mason and Kathy Edwards (Co-Moderators) • Ferial Aldag • Sue Benko • Carole Clarkson • Chris Cluett
Sue Dishart • Lisa Flanagan • Terence D. Flanagan (Youth) • Julie Fowler • Jo Ann Nerenburg • Debera Prosek

OUR STAFF

Terence J. Flanagan, Director of Music and Fine Arts • Jim Riehl, Business Administrator

Leah Saulsberry, Sunday School Director • Wendy Starr, Office Manager

Emily Johnson, Communications Assistant • Kate and Matt Ziance, Operations Managers

Terence D. Flanagan, Sunday Audio Technician

SIGN UP to Read, Usher or Greet <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e0b4aaaad2aa31-sunday>

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram:	DONATE: 	FPC YouTube Channel: 
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