

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW CANAAN

4TH SUNDAY IN LENT MARCH 11, 2018

\* *ALL WHO ARE ABLE ARE INVITED TO STAND.*

#### GATHERING

Please prayerfully allow the silent, sacred space of the sanctuary

and the quiet stirrings of the Spirit to prepare your heart and mind for worship.

**PRELUDE** *“Prelude, Op. 43, No. 1”* Reinhold M. Gliere

**\* CALL TO WORSHIP** Rev. Christopher G. Tate

One: We have gathered in the presence of God, who is love.

#### Many: We have gathered in the shadow of the cross, sign of God’s love.

One: Let us give thanks for the compassion of God, the grace of Jesus Christ, and the unity of the Holy Spirit.

#### All: We will pray and sing, praising God with hearts and hands and voices. Amen.

**\* PROCESSIONAL HYMN No. 261** *“God of Compassion, in Mercy Befriend Us*” O QUANTA QUALIA

#### PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison) Rev. Kathryn Kibbie Laird We do not always walk well along the edge, God. At times we fall into chasms that separate us from you, from one another, from ourselves. With eyes closed, we risk falling into the abyss.

**We attempt to stabilize our journey by demanding signs and seeking wisdom along the way. We fail to ask, “Where is Christ being sacrificed now?” At the end of our journey, the hour will be at hand. The questions flood our conscious minds: What could we have done that night in Gethsemane? Could we have been part of the machinery that murdered Christ? We shudder at the answers. We need the strength and assurance of your grace…**

**TIME OF SILENT CONFESSION…**

**KYRIE ELEISON** *“Create in Me a Clean Heart, O God”*

#### DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

We ***have*** this assurance: that not death or life, not angels or rulers, not present things or future things, not powers, or height, or depth, or any other thing that is created, can separate us from God’s love in Christ Jesus our Savior.

**\* CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** No. 579 The Gloria Patri

#### Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

**As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

**SHARING OUR LIFE AND MINISTRY**

Please sign the card and pass it to your neighbor. As you pass it back to the center, take note of who is here so we can become better acquainted. Visitors, please give your address, telephone, and e-mail information.

#### TIME WITH CHILDREN

**CHILDREN ARE INVITED TO SUNDAY’S COOL ROTATION**

(Please bring your buck and a can offering with you to Sunday’s Cool)

#### THE WORD

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (unison)** Jenny Volanakis **Nourish us, O God, with your word of life. Bring us to our senses, so your purposes may be apparent to us. Take away both the uncertainty, and arrogance, in our views of ourselves. We want to rejoice with our sisters and brothers who are finding new life. Grant that we may hear your music, and be freed to join in the dancing. Amen.**

**FIRST LESSON** Numbers 21:1-9 (OT page 139)

Minister: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

#### People: Thanks be to God.

**ANTHEM** *“God So Loved the World”* Hugo Distler

*Schola Cantorum*

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

**SECOND LESSON** John 3:14-21 (NT page 94)

Minister: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

#### People: Thanks be to God.

**SERMON** *“The Same Old Thing, Just Different”* Rev. Christopher G. Tate

#### RESPONDING

**\* HYMN No. 84** *“In the Cross of Christ I Glory”* RATHBUN

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE** Rev. Mary Marple Thies Leader: The Lord be with you.

#### People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us pray...

#### 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.**

**PRESENTATION OF TITHES, OFFERINGS AND OURSELVES**

**OFFERTORY** *“Come Away With Me”* John D. Horman Come away with me to a quiet place, apart from the world with its frantic pace, to pray, reflect, and seek God's grace. Come away with me. Come away. Come and pray with me on a gentle sea, on top of a hill

in the Galilee, in gardens like Gethsemane. Come away with me. Come away. Come today with thoughts of the countless ways that God's steadfast love blesses all our days, and join with me in silent praise.

Come away with me. Come away. Come and say, in words whispered from your soul, the feelings and actions you can't control. Your spirit needs to be made whole. Come away with me. Come away. Come away with me to a quiet place, to God's loving arms waiting to embrace all those who come in hope of grace. Come away with me. Come away.

\* **DOXOLOGY** 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**

**SENDING**

* **HYMN No. 298** *“There's a Wideness in God's Mercy”* IN BABILONE
* **CHARGE AND BLESSING** (Please be seated for the Choral Response & the Ringing of the Church Bell) **CHORAL RESPONSE** *“God Be in My Head”* John Rutter **RINGING THE CHURCH BELL**

\* **POSTLUDE** *"Allegro"* from Sonata Op. 14, No. 2 L.V. Beethoven

#### TODAY AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

Welcome to the Service of Worship for the Lord’s Day. Parents of **infants through age four** are encouraged to take their children to the Nursery School classrooms during our services. **Students in preK-7** should follow their teachers to class.

**Today in Sunday’s Cool:** Children up to Grade 4 will continue to explore Lent through a culinary-inspired activity, while 5-7th grade youth will head to the Barn to continue their “Feasting on the Word” program.

**Greeters**: The Benington Family; **Worship Coordinator:** John Servidea; **Ushers:** Brian Carlson, Peggy Hooker, Anne Palmer, Caroline Turpin; **Cross Bearer:** Armin Thies**; Lay Reader:** Jenny Volanakis; **Musicians:** The First Presbyterian Church Choir; Schola Cantorum

**Let us keep in our thoughts and prayers: *New Concerns:*** Jim Servidea, father of John Servidea. ***Continued concerns:*** Grace Chung; Neil Coakley; Ann Depuy; John Edwards; Graham Harden; Vince Lombardi; Jim Mierendorf; Alanna Ruszkowski; The Stricos family (friends of Joe and Diana Ruszkowski); Ruth Swanberg; Ronald Witt. *The Abo Noktah family (our Syrian refugees):* Khaldoun (father), Khawla Alzob (mother), daughters Hanin and Zain, and sons Yaman and Ahmed.

**Flower Memorials:** If you wish to have flowers in the sanctuary to celebrate an anniversary, a baptism, a birthday, or to memorialize a loved family member or friend please call Barbara Wentzel, Flower Coordinator, at 203-966- 5402 or email at barbarawentzel@mac.com.

**No Gift Too Small!** The Bell Tower Society welcomes gifts and bequests of all sizes. Every dollar given makes a difference in serving the long-term welfare of our church. If you have questions about remembering the church in your estate plans, please contact Jim Beall in the church office.

**New Canaan Food Pantry:** Items in need now due to low/no stock are Pancake Mix – Add Water Only, Syrup, Herbal Tea, Taco Kit, Corned Beef Hash, Cookies, Crackers, Tortilla Chips, Pretzels, Kids Juice Boxes. **No beans or soup are needed now.** Please drop these items in the shopping cart at the back of the Sanctuary and we will make sure they are delivered to the New Canaan Food Pantry.

**Cents-ability:** On March 4, we collected $130. Our total collection since we began Cents-ability at our church in November 2011 is $18,802. Thank you for your awareness and generous response to hunger. If you would like more information on Cents-ability or need a Cents-ability cup, please call the church office. Remember to fill up your Cents-ability cup ‘til it runneth over! **Our next collection is April 1.**

# Preparing for Lent

***Into the Wilderness***

Lent is the period preceding Easter when we Christians are challenged to focus on our sinfulness and need for God’s mercy. Mirroring the forty days of Jesus’ time in the wilderness when he was tested, Lent is our wilderness time, too. In Sunday worship, we will explore the idea of what it means to be in wilderness time. Christians use prayer, Bible study, acts of mercy, repentance and Christian conversation to reflect on how they are tested in their faith, how they separate themselves from God and one another. Lent is wilderness time, but there are oases in this wilderness, for it is interrupted by six Sundays. On Sunday we continue to celebrate the resurrection. Lent, then is a time that is marked by solemnity and joy, sin and grace, death and life. It is appropriate then to give up something as well as to add something, to empty oneself to make room for the Holy Spirit as well as to offer forgiveness, to fast from what stands between you and God and to feast on the promise of grace. We invite you to choose a special way to participate in the Season of Lent.

# Sunday Worship in Lent

**The Fourth Sunday in Lent -- Sunday, March 11, 10:00 a.m.**

Scripture: Numbers 21:1-9, John 3:14-21 Sermon by The Rev. Christopher G. Tate

**The Fifth Sunday in Lent -- Sunday, March 18, 10:00 a.m.**

Scripture: Jeremiah 31:31-34, John 12:20-33 Sermon by The Rev. Mary Marple Thies



Vespers: An Evening Service for the Fifth Sunday of Lent

**Sunday, March 18th at 4:00 p.m. at FPC**

The combined choirs of FPC and Round Hill Community Church, Greenwich, will lead a service of evening worship, or "Vespers". This intimate service will feature Gabriel Fauré's *Requiem* for choir, organ, harp, violin, and cello. Come find quiet and stillness as we prepare for Christ's journey from the cross to resurrection.

**Organ Update:** Today, Sunday, March 11th is the last Sunday we are without the organ in worship! Now that the roof is almost complete, and the most dust-shaking movements in the installation process have passed, the organ can soon begin to sound once more. The Thompson-Allen Organ Company will be here the week of March 12th to uncover the instrument, clean the case, and re-tune our 1968, 52 rank Aeolian-Skinner organ. Many thanks to Joe Dzeda and Nate Ventrella from Thompson-Allen for their work and guidance, thank you to the staff, choir and congregation at FPC for your patience during this time, and many thanks to Rose Scott Rothbart and Charlie Robinson for their cooperation in keeping our fine instruments safe and beautifying our sanctuary building. I hope you will come and enjoy the organ and combined choirs of FPC and Round Hill Community Church, Greenwich as we present Gabriel Fauré's *Requiem* in an evening service of Vespers on Sunday, March 18th at 4:00 pm!

**Fun for All! Don't miss our second annual FPC March Madness Fun Night, Saturday, March 24 at 6pm. Adults**: March Madness begins at 6:00pm in the Common Room. A Regional Game will be live on the big screen. We will have soda, beer and wine. Please bring an hors d’oeuvres for 12 to share OR a crock pot of chili and enter the chili cook off contest! **Children and Youth Helpers Report directly to the Tate Barn for our** PJs and Pizza Party! Bingo is back, and we will watch the movie Sing and eat pizza from 6:00 - 8:00 pm in the Tate Youth Barn. *Come in your pajamas*! Please bring $5 per kid for pizza.

**Wednesday Lenten Dinners and Bedtime Prayers**

A program for the whole family: A Lenten Dinner, Fellowship,

Stations of the Cross for Children, and Candlelight Worship for the entire Church Family 5:30pm-7:00pm

#### Featuring the “I Am Sayings of Jesus from the Gospel of John”

Fourth Week in Lent—Jesus says, “I am the true vine.” (John 15:1)

Wednesday, March 14, 2018 with The Rev. Kathryn Kibbie Laird preaching

Fifth Week of Lent—Jesus says, "I am the Good Shepherd.” (John 10:11)

Wednesday, March 21, 2018 with the Rev. Mary Marple Thies preaching

## Stations of the Cross a program for children and youth:

The program will begin on 2/28 and is led by our confirmation class. *Come for an interactive trip back in time*… see the disciples at the last supper, watch as Judas betrays Jesus for silver coins, see Jesus carry his cross to Golgotha and hammer nails into a large cross, visit the tomb where Jesus lay, and hear Mary talk about the first Easter morning.

### Mission and Outreach Opportunity: Food for the NC Food Pantry

First Presbyterian Church collects bags of food to fill the shelves of the New Canaan Food Pantry during the season of Lent. Take home a grocery bag, and bring it back filled with the items on the list. Each week watch as the back of our sanctuary grows in our love for those who need food and assistance right here in New Canaan. We will deliver the bags on Palm Sunday (March 25).

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

**Palm/Passion Sunday – March 25**

**9:15 AM Ecumenical Blessing of the Palms at God’s Acre**

**10:00 AM Worship Service at FPC**

The Rev. Kathryn Kibbie Laird preaching

**Palm Sunday**--Children's procession with palms—Immediately following worship, parents are encouraged to bring their kids for the Eggstravaganza Egg Hunt which will be held outside (rain or shine) by age group. Please bring a basket for hunting and a camera.

**Maundy Thursday – March 29**

The Rev. Mary Marple Thies

**7:30 PM The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper**

First Presbyterian Church Choir Tenebrae Service

**Good Friday – March 30**

The Rev. Christopher G. Tate

**7:30 PM Worship Easter Sunday – April 1**

**THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD**

*Rev. Kathryn Kibbie Laird preaching at both services.*

**9:00 AM Service with Holy Communion**

First Presbyterian Church Choir, Children’s Choirs, Brass Quintet and Organ

**11:00 AM Service with Holy Communion**

First Presbyterian Church Choir, Schola Cantorum, Brass Quintet and Organ

**Easter Sunday**--Easter Children's Chapels—Sunday's Cool will offer a special Easter Children's Chapel for both the 9am and 11am services. Please bring your entire family as we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The chapel is open to all children who would like to attend. Infant and nursery care is available at both services.

*Would you like to see our sanctuary filled with flowers during the joyous weeks of Easter?*

*Please call the church office, (203) 966-0002, if you would like to contribute****.***



### Friday Café: Every Friday Morning!

Drop in at FPC on Friday mornings anytime between 9:00-10:00am – we’ll have the fire going, coffee and good company! Bring something yummy to share or just come for the fellowship. *“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”* – I Thessalonians 5:11

Deacon Missions - Driving. Do you ever need a ride to or from church or church events? The deacons can help! Do you attend church or church events and would you be willing to be on an email list of potential drivers for others? The deacons can help there too!

The deacons are looking to expand our Driving mission by developing a list of potential drivers beyond the current Board of Deacons. We are also seeking to reach-out to those who may need rides to assure that all church members are able to attend church services and events. If you can be an occasional driver or you or anyone you know need rides to church, please call Tina at the church office or stop by the Deacon table in the Common Room after church today.

#### THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

178 Oenoke Ridge, New Canaan, CT 06840 Tel.: 203-966-0002 // [www.fpcnc.org](http://www.fpcnc.org/)

*Church Office Hours are Monday-Friday 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM*

**SUNDAY, MARCH 11: 4TH Sunday in Lent 10:00 AM Worship**

**Update from Interim Pastor Nominating Committee:**

The Interim Pastor Nominating Committee continues to meet regularly, review resumes, and has now conducted several group interviews with individual candidates, both by teleconferencing and in person.

Please continue to pass along your thoughts on possible candidates, candidate criteria, and any other recommendations to the Committee.

**Committee Members:** Bob Caird, Chair Andrew Gifford

Natasha Moore Lombardi Constanze Sheridan Lynn Jackson Quinn

**Rev. Christopher G. Tate preaching**

10:15 AM Sunday’s Cool for Grades preK-7

**11:00 AM Annual Congregational Meeting/Potluck Lunch**

11:15 AM Cherub Choir

11:15 AM Coffee Hour

3:45 PM MSYG/HSYG: Bowling at Bowlmor

**MONDAY, MARCH 12**

2:00 PM Meditation Group

6:30 PM Purple Heather Dancers

**TUESDAY, MARCH 13**

1:00 PM Leadership Team

8:00 PM Men’s A.A.

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14**

10:00 AM Music Librarians

5:00 PM Carol Choir

5:00 PM Confirmation Class

**5:30 PM Lenten Dinner and Bedtime prayers**

**THURSDAY, MARCH 15**

3:30 PM Special Church

7:30 PM FPC Choir

**FRIDAY, MARCH 16**

9:00 AM Friday’s Café

**SATURDAY, MARCH 17**

9:15 AM A.A. (closed discussion)

10:00 AM Concert Rehearsal

10:30 AM A.A. (open discussion)

**SUNDAY, MARCH 18: 5TH Sunday in Lent 10:00 AM Worship**

**Rev. Mary Marple Thies preaching** 10:15 AM Sunday’s Cool for Grades preK-7 11:15 AM Cherub Choir

11:15 AM Coffee Hour

11:15 AM Board of Deacons

11:30 AM Membership Involvement Committee 11:30 AM Youth Ministry Committee

**4:00 PM Vespers: Gabriel Fauré's *Requiem***

**OUR MINISTERS**

The Entire Congregation

**OUR PASTORS**

The Rev. Kathryn Kibbie Laird, Acting Head of Staff The Rev. Mary Marple Thies, Parish Associate

Rev. Christopher G. Tate, Parish Associate

**OUR STAFF**

Victoria Shields, Director of Music / Sherry Tate, Cherub Choir director Jim Beall, Acting Church Administrator / Tina St. Armand, Office Manager Erika Hagan, Administrative Assistant to Children and Youth Ministries

Kuky and Andres Pereira, Operations/Security Managers / Edgar Torres, Day Sexton

**THE SESSION**

*Our Pastors*

*Scott Beyer, Clerk of Session*

*George Benington, Bell Tower Society Sue Benko, Communications*

*Laurel Carlson, Youth Ministries Carole Clarkson, Worship, Music and Arts*

*Linda Ferguson, Nominating Lisa Gifford, Congregational Life Jennifer Gulden, Personnel*

*Julie Hoffman, Member-At-Large Freia Mierendorf, Co-Youth Glenn Mierendorf, Outreach Dede McEvoy, Strategic Planning Andy Petitjean, Finance*

*Lynn Quinn, Adult Education Julie Reeves, Membership Involvement*

*Charles Robinson, Co-Buildings and Grounds Rose-Scott Rothbart, Co-Buildings and Grounds Kevin Thomson, Advisory Committee*

*Spencer Reeves, Co-Youth Jenny Volanakis, Children's Ministries*

*Barbara Wentzel, Stewardship*

**THE DEACONS**

Jen and Steve Van de Graaf, *Co-Moderators*

Carson Allsteadt, *Co-Youth*

Erica Bergmans, *Inspirica, Meals-on-Wheels*

Mary Jane Bolin, *Senior Lunch* Peg Bull, *Flock Program* William Dooley, *Co-Youth* Cindy Hagopian, *Inspirica*

Karen Hanson, *Memorial Services and Receptions*

Beth Hersam, *Flowers and Cards* Chris Kniffin, *Member-At-Large* Nichole LaBadie, *Co-Youth*

Linda Martin, *Baptisms; Flock Program* Sarah Robinson, *Pastoral Care Team* Kristen Rodgers, *Cards and Flowers* Kathleen Servidea, *Cards and Flowers*

Elizabeth Stuart, *Flowers and Cards, Treasurer*

Ashley Walker, *Co-Youth*

*Rev. T. Guthrie Speers, Jr., Pastor Emeritus - Mrs. Marilyn J. Ballantine, Minister of Music Emerita*