Sunday Worship, April 24, 2022,10am
The Second Sunday of Easter

As you know, we are now gathering both in-person and online.

If you are worshipping at home, you may access
the livestream of the service in one of two ways.

If you prefer to watch on youtube, the link and Bulletin will be in an email that will go out Sunday at 6am.

The service will also be live on the church's Facebook page:
https://www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalBranford/

Each Sunday, BCTV Cable 18 airs the worship service
from the previous Sunday at 5:30pm.

April Showers Bring May Flowers!

Do April showers really bring May flowers, or is this just something we say to help us overcome the blahs we feel on a cold and rainy April day?

As the last of the winter storms turn to heavy rains the perennials begin to sprout and bloom with vibrant colors, their aromatic scents fill the air. The birds are singing, the sun is shining, and everything seems new again.

Spring is a reminder that God is all about making things new.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NRSV)
So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

Enjoy this beautiful Spring season. *The beauty of God is all around us, rejoice!*

Be blessed,

Missy Van Vliet

April 24, 2022
Prelude: *Mein Jesu, der du Mich,* Brahms - Phil Rinehart
Introit: *Our Darkness is Never Darkness in Your Sight*
Liturgist: Margot Hardenbergh
Hymn of Praise: *All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name*
Children's Time:
Scripture Reading:
Psalm 150 https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=517408104

Acts 5:27-32 https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=517408129
Sermon: Rev. Joseph Perdue
Hymn of Reflection: *The Head That Once Was Crowned*
Reimagining Moment: Sharon Reynolds
Offertory: Phil Rinehart
Hymn of Dedication: *When I Survey the Wonderous Cross*
Postlude: *Crown Him With Many Crowns,* Anonymous - Phil Rinehart

---

Your Offering

We are so very grateful for your generosity. It makes a real difference. Every little bit of your generosity counts and we thank you so much! FCCB, 1009 Main St., Branford, CT 06405 Thank you for being the Church!

Faith Formation Focus with Kerry

This Easter season, we are talking all about the early church and the book of Acts of the Apostles. We will be spending time during our Children's Message talking about present day people who have done extraordinary acts for God. We'll be talking about ordinary people who did (and are still doing) amazing things in their communities. This week we'll be focusing on someone who has a connection to Earth Day, which is this weekend!

In Sunday School this week, we'll be staring our last unit of this Sunday School year and it's all about the early church. This week's story is the Road to Emmaus and we have some fun activities to share as we explore the story. It's getting loud, fun and active down in the Sunday School Wing. Come join us! All children and youth are welcome. Classes go to grade 7 and after that we welcome you as a helper!! Join us at 10am, starting in Worship.

PF Youth Group is having a **Painting Party** Sunday directly after Worship and Sunday School. We'll be getting all the furniture out, cleaning up and painting the Youth Room. We need adults to assist and supervise and every one of our youth to lend a hand! Many hands make light work!! Join us for a fun afternoon of painting! Our new couches have arrived as well! If you are able to help us for part or all of the afternoon, please reach out to Kerry. We can't wait to share the final product of our cozy new space with you all!

Keep your eyes open for the many events we have coming. This is a fun, busy and exciting time of the year.

In Peace and Partnership,

Kerry Stewart
Faith Formation Coordinator
kerry@firstcongregationalbranford.org

Celebrate Earth Day 2022
Saturday, April 23rd,*
9am to Noon

* Rain date, Sunday, April 24, Noon —3pm

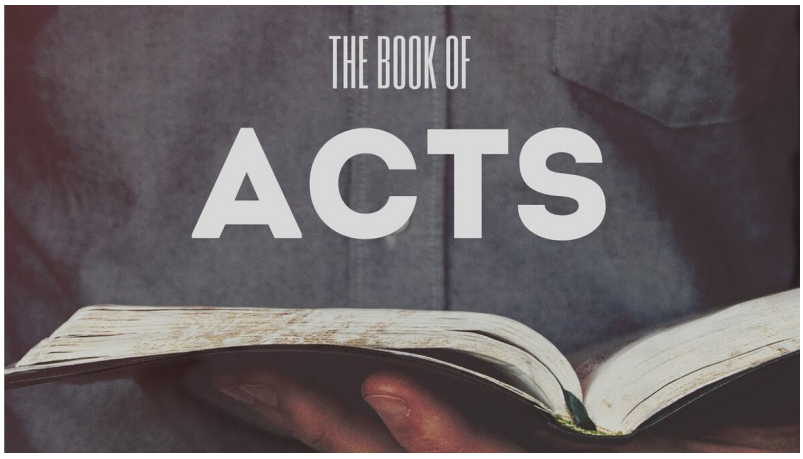
Spring Into Action!

An Earth Day Fair on the Branford Green

Activities for kids * Exhibits * Giveaways
Explore how we are helping our planet and
how we can do more to live sustainably.
More details at livingwiselyandwell.org

Also, it's the **Annual Branford Cleanup Day**.
Volunteer questions: heatherwsweeney@gmail.com
Bring your collections to the dumpster
on the Green and enjoy the Fair!

Spring into Action is co-sponsored by the Town of Branford and Living Wisely and Well on Planet Earth.
Cleanup Day: Branford Conservation/Environmental Commission



The Unexpected Acts of God: A Sermon Series for the Season of Easter

Acts is full of surprises. Things are not what they appear to be. Tyrants don't always win. Jesus appears in unexpected ways. Rules we thought were hard and fast no longer apply. That's why churches often focus on the Acts of the Apostles during the Season of Easter. Acts makes no promises about trying to prove or explain Jesus' resurrection. The book does, however, dare us to dream of what the God of Resurrection can do in our world today.

The Second Sunday of Easter April 24 *Acts 5:27-32* God's Grace may emerge from unlikely sources. God can frustrate the plans of powerful oppressors even as God extends forgiveness to them.

The Third Sunday of Easter May 1 *Acts 9:1-20* More often than we realize, being a Christian isn't about changing the perspectives of the people around us, but changing our perspectives about them.

The Fourth Sunday of Easter May 8 *Acts 9:36-43* An obscure woman leads a group of Jesus' followers in a culture that is scandalized by women with authority. Her death triggers an outpouring of grief for all the ways she served her community, and for her work to unite different cultures in a common cause. Her new life shows us that in a post-Easter world, death is only ever a prelude to resurrection.

The Fifth Sunday of Easter May 15 *Acts 11:1-18* Pentecost, the climax of the crucifixion and resurrection narrative in Scripture has never ended. The Spirit continues to call people into a new, diverse community. God is still speaking, and the more we listen, the more we realize we belong to each other.

The Sixth Sunday of Easter May 22 *Acts 16:9-15* The new and struggling Church, led by unlikely outsiders, creates community even when those communities attract scorn from others. That witness, born from an empty tomb not far from a site of mass executions, knows how to take up residence outside the walls. That's usually where we have to go to meet God.

The Seventh Sunday of Easter May 29 *Acts 16:16-34* Jesus' followers' chance upon the dangerous, violent, and ugly world of trafficking and exploitation when they first enter Europe. In the regional center of Imperial power, they learn how dangerous a message of liberation can be to those in authority and choose love despite the risks.

Pentecost June 5 *Acts 2:1-21* All the extraordinary events in Acts and the history of the church can be traced back to this event. The church is born amid fire and chaos as the dreams of ancient poets and prophets come to life.

Understanding Spiritual Gifts

Faith Formation Program

As we come into this new season of our community's story, we are going to take the Season of Easter to explore Spiritual Gifts: What they are and how you can figure out yours! This study will follow a similar format as the Racism and the Church program earlier this year. We have a book to guide us: *Understanding Spiritual Gifts along with a survey Your Spiritual Gifts Inventory. Join Us!*

We will be meeting after Coffee Hour on Sunday's:
April 24
May 15
May 22
June 5

Please sign up by contacting the Church Office or on the Sign up Genius here: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0449ACA62AA0FB6-understanding

As soon as we receive your sign up, we'll get the books to you!

Looking forward to exploring with you to see what your gifts are!

Rev. Joseph Perdue, Senior Minister
Kerry Stewart, Faith Formation Coordinator

Horseshoe Crab Program

May 24, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Join this co-sponsored program with the First Congregational Church of Branford and the Branford Land Trust to learn about the ecology and importance of horseshoe crabs in our lives today. The program will be held at Love's Beach, part of Killam's Point Conference Center.

This program is free and open to the public, but registration is required. Please email info@killamspoint.org to register.

Branford Builds and PF Youth Group Collaboration

Picnic Tables for Killam's Point Work Weekend

The time has come to replace the picnic tables out at Killam's Point. And our Youth along with trusty and handy adults, will be building picnic tables under Brad Hotchkiss and Peggy Keck's supervision! For so many of us, Killam's Point is such a special place and to get to do something to help care for the space is very exciting. We do need as many hands as possible to make this a success and have everything ready to go in time for our All-Church-Picnic on Sunday, May 15th.

We will be completing this task on Saturday April 30th from 2pm-5:30pm and Sunday May 1st from 1pm until we are done. As we know, many hands make light work!!

We need:

• Youth to learn how to build (Ages 10 and up please)
• Adults to supervise the Youth
• Handy adults to help direct the building
• Support people:
o We need snacks, drinks etc. and people to serve them and keep everyone happy and fed.

You can sign up to work either day or both and for a period of time that works for your schedule.

Please reach out to Kerry (kerry@firstcongregationalbranford.org) or the Church Office to volunteer for any of these roles.

Save the Date: All-Church Picnic

With Special Guests: ShoreGrass

Sunday, May 15th from 4-6pm at Killam's Point

Fundraiser for the Youth Local Mission Project 2022

We provide the burgers, hot dogs, rolls, condiments,

Watermelon and chips, as well as water, lemonade and papergoods.

You bring the rest! *Yes we get to have a potluck portion this year!!*

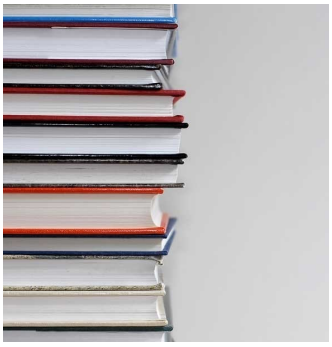
More details and sign up coming soon!

Knit, Purl and Pray

We will wear masks and be socially distanced in the Russel Room, but we can once again be together and catch up on the past 14 months. Anyone is welcome whether you can knit or crochet or neither. We can teach you. We make prayer shawls, baby hats, and work on our own craft projects.

We meet on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 10:00 – 11:30. Our next session will be April 28th.

Please join us!



Book Group

The book group will meet on Wednesday, May 4 at 7:00 pm in the Russel Room.

We will be discussing the book, The Choice: Embrace the Possible by Edith Eger.

June 1 - TBD

Barbara Colley

GROCERY CARDS WILL BE SOLD AFTER WORSHIP ON SUNDAYS

Big Y Stop and Shop

Did You Know… FCC Branford makes 5% of every dollar on the grocery cards we sell?

If you buy a $100 grocery card, you get $100 in groceries, and FCC gets $5! It's that easy. This currently adds up to about $2000 income annually for FCC and could easily be more. We offer both $50 and $100 Stop and Shop cards and $50 and $100 Big Y cards. Cards are sold after worship every Sunday. Why not try it out and help support FCC?

THANK YOU

Kids Weekend Meal Pick Up

Weekend food for Branford children will be distributed at:

Feed Branford Kids Warehouse - 29 Business Park Dr.

Every Thursday, 5-6 PM

Free for all Branford Children

We are also distributing weekend nutrition through the elementary schools and the Branford Early Learning Center, and working on permission to do so at the High School and Middle School.

For further information, please go to www.feedbranfordkids.org, or find @feedbranfordkids on Facebook.

The Branford Microfund, Inc.

The Branford Microfund, Inc. is a 501c3 nonprofit whose mission is to help members of the Branford community, in need of assistance to see them through a financial emergency. Something a bank can't or won't do.

The Microfund offers loans of up to $3,000, interest free, with up to 30 months to repay. The loans are for unexpected, non-recurring expenses such as the purchase of a car needed to get to and from work, a major car repair, dental work, etc. The application process is confidential. All you need to show is the ability to repay the loan without interest in up to 30 months.

The FCCB Mission Board, the Branford Rotary Club, the Branford Community Foundation and others have made generous donations to the Microfund to fund its mission.

For additional information on how to apply for a loan or make a donation, go to www.branfordmicrofund.org . Brochures are also available in the Church office. Remember, all inquiries are completely confidential.

Betsy Gay
Norb Church
Chip Marsh

Sunday Flower Chart

If you are able to contribute $35 for flowers, please consider signing up on the flower chart located on the bulletin board outside the Russel Room. You can also call or send an e-mail and Missy will sign up for you. Include who/what you would like the flowers to be in honor/memory/celebration of.

Thank you so much for keeping our altar adorned, and our flower fund supported!

For Our Prayers This Week

We give thanks for…
The safety of the runners and spectators in the first Boston Marathon in several years

Our new Afghani neighbors who are getting settled in Branford
The return to normalcy - step by step

We pray for our neighbors nearby and far across the globe...
For the people of Ukraine whole lives continue to be shattered by war
For the people of Poland and elsewhere who offer safe haven for Ukrainian refugees
For the victims of major shootings that took place recently in the U.S. ~ in New York City;
Pittsburgh, PA; Portland, OR; Hampton County, SC; and Columbia, SC

Ongoing prayers for…
Reg Vetrano, Jean Andros, Sharon Reynolds, Ethel Marchesseault (Linda's mother) and Linda's Brother-in-law Charlie, Barbara O'Keefe, Tom Spivey (Linda Mitchell's father), Marissa, Betsy Boynton, Ruth Greco (Mae Genovese's sister), Zak and EmmaRae Carroll, Alberto Tirry (friend of Deb Laudano), David Lendler, Jeff Buggee, Philip Rinehart, Bianca Dorsi (Aunt of Betsy Dorsi), Janice Roberts (FCCB CDC), Rick Barker, Don Potter, William Chisholm (Teresa Sander's Grandfather), George Spear, Janet Young, Colin & Justin Williams (Linda Mitchell's cousins), Grace Chaplin (Paul's mother), Nancy Dougherty, Joseph Arnson (Take-A-Vet Fishing Volunteer Care Member), Marge Nalewajek (Meghan St. Pierre's mother), Ella Furjes, and her mom, Gwen (Jennifer and Mareyna McCaughtry's friends), Cory Martens (Kelly Marten's brother), Jim Bolan, Rose & Tom Moore (Sharon Reynold's Mom & brother), Edward DeFrancesco, Dormer Family, Robert & Margaret Gehm (parents of Nancy Gehm), Martha Hickman (Lil Sakai's mom), Alison Hobbie (Betsy Gay's daughter), Sylvia O'Brien, Lou Wells

---

Life Among the Believers

Sunday, April 24
10:00 am Worship Service - Meetinghouse
11:15 am Youth Group - Youth Room
11:30 am Understanding Spiritual Gifts - Russel Room

Monday, April 25

Tuesday, April 26
7:00 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal - Meetinghouse

Wednesday, April 27
7:00 pm Church Board Meeting - All Purpose Room

Thursday, April 28
10:00 am Knit, Purl, Pray - Russel Room
7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal - Meetinghouse

Friday, April 29

Saturday, April 30
2:00 pm Workday for Picnic Tables - Killam's Point

Sunday, May 1
10:00 am Worship Service - Meetinghouse
1:00 pm Workday for Picnic Tables - Killam's Point

Upcoming Events

Sunday, May 15
11:00 am New Members Class (following Worship)
4:00 pm All Church Picnic (details to come) - Killam's Point

Sunday, May 24
7:00 pm Horseshoe Crab Program - Love's Beach, Killam's Point

---

GLOBAL MINISTRIES - WEEKLY PRAYERS

Each week Global Ministries highlights the work our mission partners do in countries around the world. We're able to pray together for our partners and the people they serve, and learn a little about the ways they're bringing God's realm to earth today. This week we are invited to pray with the people of Lebanon.

Pray with Lebanon, April 24, 2022

Lectionary Selection: Acts 5:27-32

Prayers for Lebanon

Dear God, how lonely it can be to obey you above the powers that insist on our fealty. At every opportunity, they threaten and terrorize those who disobey, while you entrust the testimony of Jesus Christ to those who obey you. O Savior, you were brutally killed in public view, but you were also exalted into life and authority; not to create another reign of terror, but to invite all to repentance and forgiveness of sins, to fellowship with you and with your Body. In this world of ancient and modern horrors make us faithful witnesses of the things that make for life, hope, truth, and reconciliation. Join our feeble human testimony to your Spirit's powerful witness in these sorrowful times. As you helped Peter and the apostles speak words of grace to the very ones who were consolidating their power and executing their policies of repression and extermination, so also fill our hearts and mouths with your truth, calling a wayward world to your ways. In the name of Jesus, we pray, Amen.

Mission Stewardship Moment from Lebanon

Lebanon is drawing close to its mid-May parliamentary elections with a battered and discouraged population, one that only three years ago had great hopes for a new tomorrow for the country. Over at least the past four decades entrenched leaders aim at securing their seats and their wealth, while each party's followers continue to entrust them with authority and the collective good is trodden underfoot. With each successive political or economic blow, the Lebanese are making do with less and less – less grain and oil (most is imported from Russia and Ukraine), less fuel (the failing banking system is preventing suppliers from being paid on time), less education (families have to choose between eating and education), less health (prepayment for curable conditions means foregoing treatment for many), less security (people keep cash – and weapons – at home, something thieves are well aware of), and less vision (many youth are determined to seek a future outside of their country).

Standing up to these circumstances takes supernatural commitment, something that only God can provide. The Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East and Haigazian University, as well as other partners of the United Church of Christ and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), are trusting God to help them maintain their witness in days like this. Despite the deep, unhealed wounds of the Armenian Genocide, begun this very day in 1915 and continuing until this day in Artsakh, and despite the forgotten promises of assistance and intervention made to them by the very same powers that are now scrambling to "stand against terror" in Europe, the Armenian community of Lebanon endeavors to provide opportunities for education to children and youth of all backgrounds and religions, along with ongoing relief assistance to the growing numbers of needy families. Jointly with the Armenian Missionary Association of America, they are defying the jaded politics of this world as they witness to life and hope in the name of the One who conquers death, then as now.

Prayer and Mission Moment by Nishan Bakalian

Mission Partners in Lebanon:
• Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees
• Forum for Development, Culture, and Dialogue (FDCD)
• Haigazian University
• National Evangelical Church of Beirut
• National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon
• Near East School of Theology
• Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East

More about Lebanon

Global Ministries Mission Co-worker in Lebanon
Nishan and Maria Bakalian serve with the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in Lebanon. Their appointments are made possible by your gifts to Disciples Mission Fund, Our Church's Wider Mission, and your special gifts.
Make a gift that supports the work of Nishan and Maria Bakalian

---

BCTV

This Sunday's service will be shown on BCTV next Sunday. BCTV Channel 18, 1070 for Comcast customers and Channel 6004 for Frontier customers at 5:30 pm on Sundays.

Notifications

Information Regarding The E-Spire

• **The deadline for an article to be published in the weekly e-spire is 12pm on Tuesdays.**
• Email articles to office@firstcongregationalbranford.org
• Those who have requested a paper copy now receive a copy of the weekly e-spire in the mail.
• The e-spire is only mailed out weekly if it can be done in a timely fashion.

If you have not received recent e-Spires, or would like to subscribe to our weekly newsletters, please let the office know and we'd be happy to help!

Find us on Facebook

Check out the church Facebook page! This is a public page for everyone to be able to see everything going on at OUR church.

Please be reminded that this page is open to the public and therefore no pictures should be shared of children unless the parents are asked specifically. The FCCB Youth Ministries CLOSED GROUP is where pictures including children can be posted.

Click the link below to be brought right to the page and like it!

https://www.facebook.com/FirstCongregationalBranford/

AMAZON SMILE DONATIONS

PLEASE shop at smile.amazon.com, and First Congregational Church can receive donations from AmazonSmile.

StartWithaSmile at smile.amazon.com/ch/06-6042800 for your purchases and Amazon donates to First Congregational Church.

©2022 First Congregational Church | 1009 Main St. Branford, CT 06405
www.firstcongregationalbranford.org 203-488-7201

Web Version Preferences Forward Unsubscribe

Powered by **Mad Mimi**®
A GoDaddy® company