Sunday Worship, May 22, 2022,10am
The Sixth 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.

Hymn Suggestions for Music Sunday

Last week during Life Among the Believers, I mentioned that we were taking hymn suggestions for music Sunday. Back in April, I wrote an article for the eSpire explaining our hymn selecting process, and how much fun it was for me to experience and be a part of it. The hymns that we enjoy represent who you are as people, our faith backgrounds, and our taste in music. This hymn suggestion is one where you can think out of the box! The hymns do not have to be our traditional congregational hymns, they don't need to be from our hymnal, the world is your oyster! If you were suggesting a hymn, there are very few ground rules.

1 - You must either send them to Missy via email (office@firstcongregationalbranford.org) OR fill out a hymn suggestion this week at coffee hour. Emailed suggestions must contain the email subject "My Favorite Hymn." Filling out a suggestion at coffee hour is the easier one for all involved. Emailed suggestions must be in by May 23rd.

2 - You must pick a hymn that you love. Maybe it is one you grew up with. Maybe it is one that you heard at a conference. Perhaps it's one that stays in your ear for the entire week.

3 - Please included a sentence or two letting us why this hymn is your favorite. During our service on Music Sunday, we will share your thoughts regarding the hymn!

Many thanks to Donna Giddings for the suggestion, I love it and am so excited to hear your favorite hymns!

Katie Jones

May 22, 2022
Prelude: *Canzona,* Buxtehude - Phil Rinehart
Introit: *Rejoice, The Lord is King* - FCCB Choir
Liturgist: Betsy Dorsi
Hymn of Praise: *God of Grace and God of Glory*
Anthem: *Go Ye Therefore, M. McDonald* - FCCB Choir
Scripture Reading: Betsy Dorsi
Psalm 67 (Psalm 67 was written by Maren Tirabassi)
Acts 16:9-15 https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=519826849
Sermon: *Risk* - Rev. Joseph Perdue
Hymn of Reflection: *We All Are One in Mission*
Offertory: Phil Rinehart
Hymn of Dedication: *Wash, O God, Your Sons and Daughters*
Benediction Response: *May the Grace of Christ Our Savior* - FCCB Choir
Postlude: *March,* Smart - 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

What an afternoon for a picnic! Thank you to everyone who came out and enjoyed a glorious afternoon at Killam's Point. And thank you for your continued support of the PF Youth Group.

This week in **Sunday School** we continue our lessons on the early church with a lesson on Lydia and the ability to do great things with God's help. There is a last opportunity to decorate some doves for our Pentecost art installation in the Meetinghouse! Please come and join us. We also have a special guest doing our Children's Message this week. I know you will enjoy it!! This is the last week of regular Sunday School for this program year.

What a great job by the PF Youth Group on setting up and facilitating the picnic!! They worked very hard this past month between the picnic table building and the picnic so now it is reward time! We are having our first **Lock In** in over three years from June 3rd at 5pm through June 4th at 10:30 am. We'll be at Killam's Point enjoying games, a night paddle (weather permitting) pizza, s'mores, movies and so much more! Our new friends from United Parish in Brookline, MA who will be joining us for our Mission Project will be joining in the fun too. We'll close out in the morning with a nice hike on the KP property and some breakfast on the beach. For more details, be sure to check out the Youth page on the website:
https://www.firstcongregationalbranford.org/pages/youth-ministry
And reach out to me. We'd love to welcome any of our youth in 5th grade and up. Our deadline to sign up has already passed, however you can still sign up. Reach out to Kerry right away!

As we move to wrapping up this program year, we have Youth-Led Worship Sunday on June 12 and of course we are prepping for our Summer Youth Local Mission Project from August 22nd-24th I ask that you keep your eyes peeled for emails about deadlines and events.

In Peace and Partnership,

Kerry Stewart
Faith Formation Coordinator
kerry@firstcongregationalbranford.org

All-Church Picnic, Thank You!!!

Thank you to everyone who made the picnic
this past Sunday such a success!

PF Youth Group members and families
and everyone else who helped with set up and clean up.

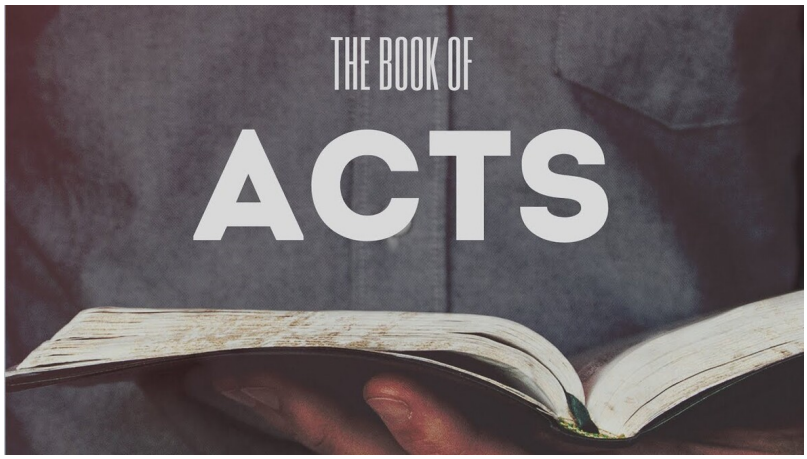
ShoreGrass

Everyone who came and shared their Potluck Dishes

Pastor Joe and Aidan on the Grill

And so many more that I'm forgetting! It could not have been
a more perfect afternoon The weather was perfect,
the fellowship wonderful and the food was stellar!
It doesn't get much better than an afternoon like that.

Remember, we were never meant to live our faith on our own,
we were meant to do this in community. And Sunday afternoon
was a great example of that. When we make time together
and spend that time in fellowship, we deepen those
connections, and our faith grows.



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 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.

CATHOLICS IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Catholics in the United Church of Christ:

Denominations do not matter nearly as much as they did just a few decades ago. Moving from one denomination to another as one changes and grows is a fact of contemporary American life. One of, if not the largest groups of new members of UCC churches are former Catholics. In many congregations, including FCCB, 40% or more of new members grew up in a Catholic Church. What's more, many seminarians with Catholic backgrounds are preparing for ordination in the UCC. What's going on?

This study, requested by church members, will explore the many similarities and differences between the Roman Catholic Church and the United Church of Christ. We will discuss the reasons why many people leave the Catholic Church and celebrate the ways their perspectives and experiences have enriched our community.

We have historically paused our Faith Formation ministries at FCCB during the summer months, including adult education opportunities. We want to know the best time to offer our study on Catholics in the United Church of Christ. If you are interested in this topic, please fill out this survey and hand it into the church office.

I am interested in attending this study:

In the Fall ____

In the Summer After Worship ____

in the Summer, on a weeknight ____

I am interested in attending on Zoom if there is a hybrid option ____

Again on Saturday, May 7th, volunteers from FCCB, cooked and served brunch to almost 60 people. We transformed breaded chicken cutlets into chicken mozzarella accompanied by pasta, garlic bread, a salad and dessert. Sue Miller has taken on the responsibility of recruiting volunteers, coordinating with the CDR and organizing us in the kitchen.

Please consider joining us on the first Saturday of every other month. Sue would appreciate additions to her volunteer list.

Barbara Colley

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.

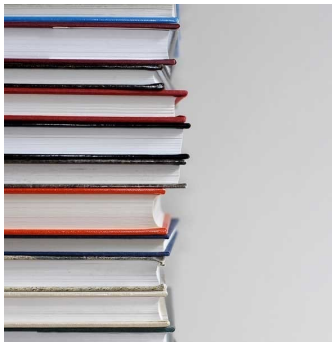
This program is free and open to the public, but registration is required. Please email info@killamspoint.org to register.

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 sessions will be June 9th & June 23rd.

Please join us!



Book Group

The book group will meet on Wednesday, June 1 at 7:00 pm in the Russel Room.

The June book is French Braid by Anne Tyler.

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 return to normalcy - step by step

We grieve with…
Helen Jasinka, whose brother Charlie passed away on May 8th.

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

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Life Among the Believers

Sunday, May 22
10:00 am Worship Service - Meetinghouse

Monday, May 23

Tuesday, May 24
7:00 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal - Meetinghouse

Wednesday, May 25

Thursday, May 26
10:00 am Knit, Purl, Pray - Russel Room
7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal - Meetinghouse

Friday, May 27

Saturday, May 28

Sunday, May 29
10:00 am Worship Service - Meetinghouse

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 El Salvador.

Pray with El Salvador, May 22, 2022

Lectionary Selection: Revelations 21:1-6

Prayers for El Salvador

Holy God, Creator of the Universe,

We lift up the people of El Salvador who for many decades now, have experienced such hardship and violence – violence which has again increased in recent days. We pray for the victims of this violence and the families who are grieving for them. Please guide those, who are trying to find ways to reach the gang members in the marginalized communities, hospitals, and prisons, with the wisdom to help the gang members begin a new life.

I also ask for your blessings, strength, and guidance for the pastors of the Lutheran Synod, many of whom are the women you have called to do your work, just as you called Lydia into your service. May they continue to be filled with the passion and love for the ministry to which you called them.

Holy God, I also pray for President Bukele and all the elected officials of El Salvador that you may guide them to lead the country to peace and economic security. I ask that you open their hearts to uphold the values of a democratic society.

Mission Stewardship Moment from El Salvador

The Lutheran Synod operates many programs, from primary schools, a clinic, health education, youth outreach, an organic coffee farm, environmental protection programs, and others. I have been able to participate in many of them. The program that is closest to my heart, however, is the Casa de Esperanza (House of Hope), which provides support for homeless women and men by offering showers, a place to wash clothes, snacks, and a warm lunch, as well as medical, psychological, and spiritual support. Pastor Emely, who oversees the

program, and I are currently exploring developing a rehabilitation and employment program to help women and men become economically independent. I have been impressed by the gentle spirit of the program participants. They have been welcoming of me and treat each other and the small staff with the utmost respect. During the daily devotional, many of them know all the hymns by heart and sing and clap loudly. It's a joy to experience. There is a palpable community spirit among the poorest of the poor. Many have given up hope for a better life, but as the name of the program says "House of Hope" we are working to give them new hope.

Prayer and Mission Moment by Rene Seidel

Mission Partners in El Salvador

- Emmanuel Baptist Church, El Salvador
- Lutheran Church of El Salvador

Global Ministries Mission Co-worker in El Salvador
Rene Seidel serves with the Salvadorian Lutheran Synod in San Salvador, El Salvador. His appointment is made possible by your gifts to Disciples Mission Fund, Our Church's Wider Mission, Week of Compassion, and special gifts. Make a gift that supports the work of Rene Seidel

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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.

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