



**Sunday Worship, May 1, 2022, 10am
The Third Sunday of Easter
Communion Sunday**

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/>**

May 1, 2022

Prelude: *Prelude in C Major*, Bach - Phil Rinehart

Introit: *Woke up This Morning*, Traditional - FCCB Choir

Liturgist: David Ridgway

Hymn of Praise: *Christ Arose*

Anthem: *Lord of the Wind and the Sea*, L. Larson - FCCB Choir

Scripture Reading:

Acts 9:1-20 <https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=518012726>

Sermon: *Who Changed* - Rev. Joseph Perdue

Hymn of Reflection: *Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks to the Risen King*

Sharing the Elements: *Communion Cannon*, R.E. Schram - FCCB Choir

Communion Hymn: *What is This Place?*

Reimagining Moment: Zak Carroll

Offertory: Phil Rinehart

Hymn of Dedication: *Amazing Grace*

Benediction Response: *All the People Said Amen*, Arr. J. Spacht - FCCB Choir

Postlude: *Toccata in d minor*, Pachelbel - 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

Our calendar here at FCCB just keeps getting more and more full and that just makes my heart sing! Why do you ask? Because connections are the heart of this community! And when two or more are gathered, we know Jesus is at the center of that gathering. We had an awesome gathering this past Sunday with PF Youth Group and were able to clean out the Youth room, steam clean our new to us furniture and get the room set up again. Next, we paint! How awesome to have that gathering space!

As this is Communion Sunday, we will be gathering for Sunday School in Walker Chapel at 10am and will join families for Communion in the Meetinghouse. This week, we'll be reading *What is Love by Mac Barnett* and starting to plan our Youth-Led Worship Service on Sunday June 12th. This is a beautiful book about all the different ways we all value and show love! Can't wait to see you all in the Chapel!

PF Youth Group is working this weekend with the Mission Weekend out at Killam's Point on the Picnic Table Build. All the details are in the specific article here in the eSpire. Our next event is Sunday, May 15th working the All-Church Picnic. Check your email next week for details!!

In Peace, Partnership and Joy,

Kerry Stewart

Faith Formation Coordinator

kerry@firstcongregationalbranford.org



From the Moderator

The Church Board meeting was held on April 20, 2022, at 7:00 PM in the APR.

The Operations Team has been working on a few issues at Killam's Point. In the past year the road over the causeway has eroded and in need of repair work. Estimates are under consideration at this time. Another water leakage needs to be addressed, a new Internet provider has been installed and 10-12 new picnic tables will be assembled by the youth group with adult help this weekend.

The Discipleship Team shared Kerry's report on the several events being planned by and for the youth groups including a 2-day event building picnic tables at KP this weekend. The youth Group is also redecorating their room in the Sunday School wing. The adult study group on Racism and the Church was completed. A new study group exploring Spiritual Gifts: what they are and how to find ours, began on April 24th after the coffee hour on Sunday.

The Worship Team delivered most of the Easter flowers to shut-in this past week. Cards will now be prepared for these flower deliveries as they are left at the door of the recipients if no one responds to the doorbell.

Rev. Joe has announced a new membership class for anyone who is interested in joining the church. Welcome bags are now available for any new visitor or family attending. An attractive FCCB shopping bag with a jar of jam, info on our church and a welcome letter.

The Church Board will sponsor the Trunk or Treat Halloween event the last of October. Can't wait for the treats, scary music and hot chocolate! Work continues on the FCCB Church Policy Book. Many people are writing about the purpose and procedures for the work and service they do in the church. The Church Board and each of the Teams are focusing their attention on writing policy for each of these activities, events and responsibilities in the church.

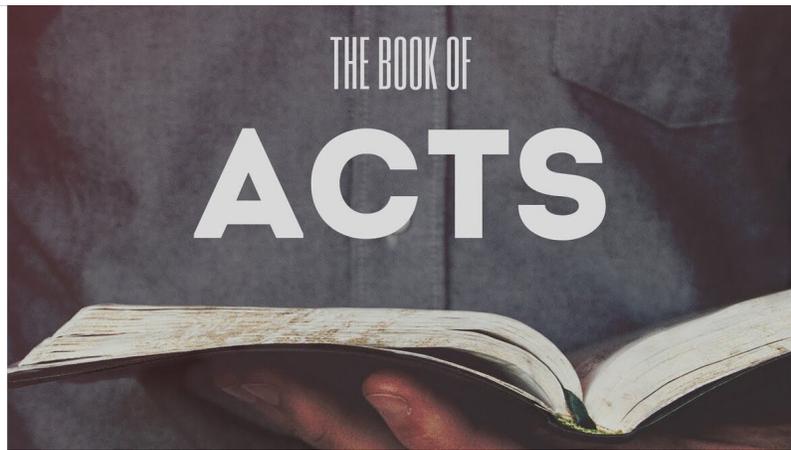
The Church Board minutes and each of the Team's minutes can be read in the black notebook at the front desk.

Deanna

Deanna O'Connell, Moderator

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203-483-8039



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 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 Bible Study

Due to great interest but scheduling conflicts, **we are postponing this program until September 2022**. Look for details in August for this program!

If you have already picked up your books, please hold onto them and put them in a safe place!

We can't wait to share it with you!

The Discipleship Team



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.

DIAPER DRIVE

Benefitting local families through Community Agency, Person-to-Person



Mother's Day Diaper Drive

In support of the CDR Diaper Bank, we are collecting diapers of
All sizes on Sunday, May 1st and Sunday May 8th.
We, as the FCCB Community, do this annually to honor Mother's.

Diapers may be brought to Worship
or brought to the Church during office hours.
Donations can be left at the Reception Desk.
Financial Contributions may also be made by noting
"Mother's Day Diaper Drive" on the Donation.

Thank you!
The Discipleship Team



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 May 12th & May 26th.

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

North Madison CC, Employment Opportunity

Bookkeeping Clerk: We are currently accepting applications for a part-time (three days/4 hours per day) bookkeeping clerk at North Madison Congregational Church (NMCC) located in North Madison at the traffic circle of Route 79 and Route 80. This position will be responsible for carrying out the general day-to-day financial operations of the church including maintaining accurate records of all receipts and payables. Must have knowledge of generally accepted accounting principles and have knowledge with QuickBooks, payroll, and processing checks. Must have understanding of business financial statements (P & L, Balance Sheet) and income tax worksheets. Must maintain confidentiality and be able to multi-task with good organizational skills, communication skills, and ability to meet deadlines accurately. The full job description is available from the church office.

If interested, please send your resume and/or inquiries to the church office, office@northmadisoncc.org.



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

Happy Birthday...

Emily Fielding – May 1st

Nora Vetrano – May 1st

We are so happy to have you in our lives!

We pray for our neighbors nearby and far across the globe...

For the people of Ukraine whose lives continue to be shattered by war

For the people of Poland and elsewhere who offer safe haven for Ukrainian refugees

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, May 1

10:00 am Worship Service - Meetinghouse

1:00 pm Workday for Picnic Tables - Killam's Point

Monday, May 2

Tuesday, May 3

7:00 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal - Meetinghouse

7:00 pm Discipleship Team Meeting - Russel Room

Wednesday, May 4

Thursday, May 5

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal - Meetinghouse

Friday, May 6

Saturday, May 7

Sunday, May 8

10:00 am Worship Service - Meetinghouse

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 the Philippines.



Pray with the Philippines Sunday, May 1, 2022

Lectionary Selection: Acts 9:1-6

Prayers for the Philippines

Gracious and loving God, your people are, again, raising their anguished cries to the heavens, because they are hurting and in pain. After two years of the coronavirus pandemic, typhoon Odette left a trail of destruction, both in life and property. Why these unyielding destructive pestilence and calamities? Your people are asking. They are distressed and aching for succor.

We pray, make your people see and feel your healing power, and touch the hearts of those who have more resources to extend a helping hand to those affected by the deadly virus and the ferocious typhoon.

We pray, open the minds of your people to see the connection between the coronavirus, typhoon Odette, and its responsibility to care for the earth, its ecosystem, and all its inhabitants. Empower your people not only to be resilient but also to be committed advocates for socio-economic and climate justice.

From the farthest north to the farthest south, visible expressions of physical and social mess are littered across the land and are calling for undivided attention. Yet, this attention has been distracted because of the coming national election, especially as political campaigns intensify, a political exercise that most people are cynical about.

We pray, guide, and empower your people, that they may have the wisdom and courage to choose what is right and best for the country, and not be swayed by the empty promises of corrupt politicians and be corrupted to exchange their votes for a tiny and short-term gain.

The typhoon, the pandemic, and other forms of calamities are truly devastating. But the pandemic that has continued to ravage the land without mercy is a socio-political one. Rampant graft and corruption as well as impunity have continued to ravage the land and its people. When will your people acquire wisdom and learn the ways of life and justice?

We pray, loving and merciful God, to continue to show your steadfast love and empowering presence, that your people may not lose hope and find the courage to act in hope that another world is still possible!

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Mission Stewardship Moment from the Philippines

Response to the Victims of Typhoon Odette's Destruction

Limasawa Island

As if the coronavirus were not enough, on December 20, 2021, a category five typhoon named Odette (Rai) made its landfall in the Philippines, leaving a trail of destruction to lives and properties. At least 392 lost their lives and estimated damage to properties of at least 35.7 billion pesos (712 million in US dollars). The places that were badly hit were Surigao, especially the islands of Dinagat and Siargao, and the Visayas, such as Bohol, Cebu, and Southern Leyte, especially the islands of Limasawa and Panaon, and the City of Maasin and neighboring towns.

In keeping with its own vision and tradition, beyond doing the work of theological education, Union Theological Seminary extended its support to the typhoon victims. UTS President, Rev. Dr. Eleazar S. Fernandez, visited Southern Leyte, particularly the towns of Pintuyan, San Ricardo, San Francisco, and Libagon, and shared some funds to help the people rebuild their devastated abodes.

Opening of Union Theological Seminary Boulevard

Union Theological Seminary Boulevard

With the increasing volume of traffic along Aguinaldo Highway in the past few years, Union Theological Seminary saw the need to help ease the flow of traffic in the area and challenged itself to contribute in whatever ways it can to respond to this pressing and urgent need. In cooperation with the Department of Public Works and Highways, the Department of Trade and Industry, and the City of Dasmariñas, the Board of Trustees of UTS made the historic decision to donate a portion of its property for the construction of a road connecting Aguinaldo Highway and Governor's Drive. The donation was signed by the President, Rev. Dr. Eleazar S. Fernandez, and by the Chair of the Property Development Committee, Bishop Rodolfo Juan, on July 19, 2018. Finally, on March 22, 2022, this road, named Union Theological Seminary Boulevard, had its formal opening celebration. On March 23, 2022, the road was opened to the public. As it exists today, the Union Theological Seminary Boulevard is a testimony to the magnanimous historic act of generosity of UTS and an embodiment of the seminary's commitment to contribute to the well-being of the wider society and to our shared flourishing!

Prayer and Mission Moment by Eleazar Fernandez

Mission Partners in the Philippines

- United Church of Christ in the Philippines
- Union Theological Seminary
- Southern Christian College

- Silliman University
- Northern Christian College
- Dansalan College Foundation

[More about the Philippines](#)

Global Mission Co-Worker in the Philippines

Eleazar Fernandez serves with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. *His appointment is 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 Eleazar Fernandez](#)

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!



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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