Sunday Worship, February 13, 2022,10am
SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

As you know, we 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.

Celebrating Valentine's Day

While the origin of Valentine's Day is unclear, according to many sources, it is possible that the love-filled holiday is based on a combination of two men. There were two Valentines executed on February 14 (in different years) by Emperor Claudius II.

One of these men, Saint Valentine of Terni, had been secretly officiating weddings for Roman soldiers against the emperor's wishes (the emperor believed that single men made better soldiers), making him, in some eyes, a proponent of love.

The second man, St. Valentine, wrote the first "valentine" greeting to a young girl he tutored and fell in love with while he was imprisoned. Before his death, he wrote her a letter signed "From your Valentine."

Today, many people celebrate Valentine's Day by sending cards decorated with hearts, roses or cupid. While others may give gifts, flowers or arrange a romantic meal in a restaurant.

John 13:34-35 (NIV) it reads:

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

This Valentine's Day, please remember to not only celebrate with your loved ones, but to spread your love with random acts of kindness to your fellow man.

Blessings,

Missy Van Vliet
Church Secretary

February 13, 2022
Prelude: *Tablatura Nova,* Scheidt - Phil Rinehart
Introit: *This is the Day*
Liturgist: Mindy Yester
Hymn of Praise: *Marching to Zion*
Anthem *Go Ye Therefore,* M. McDonald
Scripture Reading:
Jeremiah 12:5-10 https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=511505712
Luke 6:17-26 https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=511505748
Sermon: *Consequences of Courage* - Rev. Joseph Perdue
Hymn of Reflection: *Lord, I want to be a Christian*
Children's Moment: Kerry Stewart
Offertory: *Air,* Pinkham
Hymn of Dedication: *Lead Me, Guide Me*
Benediction Response: *God Be With You*
Postlude: *Toccata,* Froberger - 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

Happy Valentine's Day! Or almost, at least. I have to admit it is not a holiday I was ever big on celebrating. That is until we had children and then every holiday became a big deal! With kiddos, it became less about romantic love and simply showing our love for each other in all the different ways we could. While I admit with a tween and teenager now, it looks quite different from when they were preschoolers, the idea is still the same. I hope all our families have received their "Share the Love" mail and have put it into action! If you haven't please reach out and I'll get you one right away

We Share the Love! Same as we'll be doing here at FCCB on Sunday February 13th with our 2nd Annual Love Fest. Be sure to check out the articles elsewhere in the eSpire to see details. Can't wait to Share the Love with you all and our community!

In Person Sunday School continues this week with a great story and lesson: The Good Samaritan. We will be working on a group art project, our Love is… Wall. We will start in Worship at 10 am with this week's Holy Troublemaker: Mr. Rogers. Not someone you'd normally think of as a troublemaker, but he did tackle all kinds of controversial topics. Join us Sunday morning to hear about it!

Pilgrim Fellowship Youth Group will be working the Love Fest! Youth and their families are needed for set up, collecting the donations for the Branford

Food Pantry as well as hosting a special coffee hour on Sunday February 13th. Check your email for more details and please **RSVP to Kerry to let her know you will be there and how you are able to help.**

I will see you all on Sunday!

In Peace,
Kerry Stewart
Faith Formation Coordinator
kerry@firstcongregationalbranford.org

2nd Annual Love Fest 2022

Loving on our Neighbors and our Community Sunday, February 13 from 11am-12noon

Sunday, February 13th we'll be celebrating the Love together! We will be collecting and blessing the donations for our community as well as hosting a special "coffee hour to go" with our noisy offering jars available for any loose change you'd like to contribute as well.

We will also be building a "Love Is…" Wall in Pilgrim Hall.

• Join us during Worship at 10 am to Bless the bounty that we will be donating to Branford Food Pantry and Church World Service Blanket Program.
• Join us during Coffee Hour where we'll be Sharing the Love with special treats "to go" and coffee as well as working on our "Love is…" Wall
• Be sure to collect a Valentine Gift from the Pilgrim Fellowship Youth Group. We will also have the Lenten Devotion booklets and cards ready.
• We will also be collecting loose change to add to our donations.
• If you are unable to join us in person and would prefer to drive by to drop off your donations and pick up your goodies, we will have volunteers available in the circle outside the Walker Chapel door who will be happy to receive your donations and provide you with your Valentine's and Lenten materials.

Any Questions please contact the Church Office or Kerry (kerry@firstcongregationalbranford.org)

Branford Food Pantry Needs:
High Need Items: (Need most and have difficulty getting from the Food Bank on a regular basis)
Vegetarian Items (in general, many more individuals are vegetarian)
Soups
Canned Tomatoes
Canned Pasta (SpaghettiOs's etc.)
Baked Beans (vegetarian preferred)

Kids Snacks:
Raisins
Small box Pudding/ Jello Cups
Fruit Cups
Cheese Crackers
Pretzels
Granola Bars

Always Need Items:
Peanut Butter
Jelly/Jam
Tuna
Canned chicken
Mac and cheese
Shelf Stable Milk
Cereal
Gluten Free Items
Rice (1 or 2 lb bags)
Brown Rice

In Peace and Health,

Kerry Stewart
Faith Formation Coordinator
kerry@firstcongretationalbranford.org

Church World Service (CWS) Blankets

Congregations around the world host CWS Blanket offerings to live out a mission to serve God's people near and far; and that's exactly how two congregations in Washington state became connected. First Presbyterian Church of Everett has been hosting "Dinner at the Bell" for 18 years. This weekly event is for low-income families, veterans, homeless, people with addictions – any community members in need - all are welcome. Along with a hot meal, guests receive blankets and hygiene kits. "A lot of places push homeless people away, and it is nice for churches to open their arms to help people," said Amanda, a guest at "Dinner at the Bell."

In the same city, only five miles away, Cascade View Presbyterian Church fundraises for the blanket ministry of CWS so that organizations and churches like First Presbyterian can serve those in need. "We have a church that believes strongly in how God calls us to love and reach out," says Pastor Luke Hyder of Cascade View Presbyterian. "We as a church want to make tangible differences for those in need."

One church gives money so the other can give blankets, and together they give hope and a tangible reminder of God's love. Hope is powerful, especially in times like these. Will you answer the call to serve God's people and give hope today?

CWS BLANKETS Showing God's love to all: a tale of two churches
Donate today to provide CWS Blankets to warm the hearts and hands of people

in need. **As part of our LOVE FEST on Sunday February 13th we are helping keep our neighbors warm by donating to CWS Blanket program. Just $10 buys a blanket that then goes to someone in need, even those right here in our own community. Please consider donating.**

Lenten Study Series: Full to the Brim

A Series on Ways We Can Fill our Spiritual Cup

As is our tradition, we are planning a Wednesday evening supper and study series for the season of Lent. This year's theme is Full to the Brim: An Expansive Lent. Our study series will focus on filling our spiritual cups. The past few years have been difficult for us all and a chance to sit back and look at what we can do to recharge and be sure we have what we need to care for ourselves and then be able to reach out and care for all those around us.

We will be exploring different ways members of our own community and a couple of guests as well, fill their own cups and how we can all apply their practices to our own lives. We'll be exploring topics such as: Community and Media and how that influences us; Nature and seeing God in Creation; Praying and Practicing the Labyrinth and more.

Our program will run on Wednesday evenings during Lent. This program is open to all ages and all stages! A light supper of soup, salad and bread will be served at 6pm with the program beginning at 6:30pm. Our meeting dates are:

March 9
March 16

March 23
March 30
April 6

We will have sign ups to share the responsibility of bringing soup, salad and bread as well as serving, clean up and set up.

Save the Dates and look for more specific details coming very soon!

The Discipleship Team

Epiphany Sermon Series: A Light to Enlighten The Nations

"For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." These lines from the Song of Simeon (Luke 2:29–32) speak of the season of Epiphany, the light of Christ for all the world. The audacity of the gospel is that the light shining in Jesus shone far beyond Israel to illuminate the whole world. During the season of Epiphany, we will focus on the steadily increasing light of Christ in the world of Luke and see how the light of Christ grows in our time. We will see how the light of Christ reached outsiders from the beginning and continued to grow, lighting the dark places throughout our world and in our own hearts.

• February 13: **Sixth Sunday After Epiphany** In the “Sermon on the Plain,” Luke’s version of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells his friends about the counter-intuitive and unexpected nature of God’s blessings. (Luke 6:17-26)
• February 20: **Seventh Sunday After Epiphany** Jesus continues the Sermon on the Plain, challenging us to follow God’s example of radical and inclusive love. (Luke 6:27-28)
• February 27: **Transfiguration Sunday**: As Jesus is literally bathed in light, the heroes of the past challenge us not to box in the message of God’s love. (Luke 9:28-43)

ATTENTION

The church office has a crockpot which was left after the church fair's Grab and Go on December 3, 2021.

Please call the office at 203-488-7201 and identify it if it belongs to you.

Thank you

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 February 24th.

Please join us!

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

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 pray for…
Ethel Marchesseault (Linda's mother) and Linda's Brother-in-law Charlie
Barbara O'Keefe
John Woods

Ongoing prayers for…
Tom Spivey (Linda Mitchell's father), Andrew Buggee (son of Jeff Buggee), 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, Jean Andros, Colin & Justin Williams (Linda Mitchell's cousins), Grace Chaplin (Paul's mother), Nancy Dougherty, Joseph Arnson (Take-A-Vet Fishing Volunteer Care Member), Wayne Childs, 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, February 13
10:00am Worship Service - Meetinghouse
11:00am Love Fest - FCCB

Monday, February 14

Tuesday, February 15
7:00pm Bell Choir Rehearsal - Meetinghouse

Wednesday, February 16
7:00pm Church Board Meeting - All Purpose Room

Thursday, February 17
7:00pm Choir Rehearsal - Meetinghouse

Friday, February 18

Saturday, February 19

Sunday, February 20
10:00am Worship Service - Meetinghouse
11:45am Local Youth Mission Service Project Info. Meeting (Zoom)

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 Fiji

Pray with Fiji, February 13, 2022

Lectionary Selection: Luke 6:17-26

Prayers for Fiji

As we enter the new year the experiences and influence from the last do not simply fade into nothingness. It is carried with us both changing us and guiding our actions. Once again we step forward with the pandemic weighing us down alongside the persisting concerns of climate change, economics, and now the fallout from the recent volcanic activity that has occurred in the Pacific and especially in the Kingdom of Tonga. May we all pray and put our thoughts to those who are in need during these times that they may find comfort and solace in God's loving embrace, and let those with loved ones facing trials receive reassurance. Let all who are facing uncertainty and fear for our present and the future be assured before you oh God. Let not only Fiji, but all of our Pacific brothers and sisters feel your presence so they may continue forward without fear. Those who are at their lowest shall be raised by you, and through you let our voices reach them to provide strength and solace in these trying times.

Mission Stewardship Moment from Fiji

The church has always been a cornerstone in Pacific life, and with that, the work of the church is ever important in embodying the values that it raises. The Pacific Conference of Churches does a tremendous amount within Fiji and the

Pacific region with its many partners and affiliated churches. In spite of it being a singular organization, it stands representative of many that believe in its work and who support it. The Blessings of Luke 6 become reminiscent of the work being done in the Pacific as the ones who would receive a reward in heaven are being reached out to while still on Earth. Be they locals or people living across the ocean, anyone is able and welcome to stand alongside and support PCC's efforts be they through disaster relief, being a voice of resistance against oppression, promoting projects, spreading awareness, or raising self-awareness. The limits are where we set them and how we think of them, and in light of that thank you for your thoughts and actions – a difference has been made whether or not you realize it.

Prayer and Mission Moment by RJ Howard

Mission Partners in Fiji

• Pacific Conference of Churches

More information on Fiji: https://www.globalministries.org/fiji

Global Ministries Mission Co-worker in Fiji
Robert Howard serves with the Pacific Christian Council, Fiji. His appointment is made possible by your gifts to Disciples Mission Fund, Our Church's Wider Mission, WOC, and your special gifts.

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/

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

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