Sunday Worship, January 16, 2022,10am
SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

In-person Worship has been cancelled for the month of January.
We will continue to worship online via youtube and facebook.

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 can also be viewed 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.

Clarence L. Jordan

As we approach Martin Luther King Day, I want to tell you about one of my spiritual heroes. Clarence Jordan is largely unknown outside of progressive Christian circles, but he has a profound legacy. His most enduring work is what he is best known for. He helped found Habit for Humanity and thousands of families who have a place to call home are a testimony to the way he put his faith into action. Jordan was also a noted Greek scholar and minister. He translated the New Testament into the dialect of rural southern Appalachia to make the Gospel clear and relevant for a people long ignored and looked down upon. His most dangerous work was his uncompromising stand against racism.

He founded Koinonia Farm as a "demonstration plot for the kingdom of God." This meant a community of believers sharing their lives and resources, following the example of the first Christian communities as described in the book Acts. It also meant that white and black Christians lived and worked

together as equals. It didn't take long for Jordan to be excommunicated by the local church. During the civil rights movement Koinonia was shot at and bombed, and members faced too many death threats to count. He died of a heart attack in 1969 when an ambulance crew turned back at the farm's border. They refused to save Jordan when they realized who he was.

When Jordan was young, and still somewhat respectable in polite society, he was invited to a church in rural North Carolina. He preached a sermon about racial equality that was received about as well as you would expect. After the service an elderly woman approached him and told him his sermon had offended her, as her grandfather had been a hero in the Confederate army. His response was to look her in the eye and say, "well ma'am, one day you're going to have to choose between following your grandfather and following Jesus."

In our adult Christian Ed group, we are studying the concept of race and the role the Church has played in American racism. As Christians we can look to the examples of Saints like Jordan, Dr. King, Robert Graetz, Will Campbell, and many others who advanced the Realm of God by fighting for equality. We also have to acknowledge the role many of our ancestors played in the genocide against Native people, slavery, and segregation. We are not responsible for the sins of our ancestors, but we do have an obligation to work for a just world now. As we approach Martin Luther King Day, may we remember that there will be times when we have to choose between "following your grandfather and following Jesus."

Whenever we are confronted with racism, sexism, and homophobia in our communities and in our hearts, may we follow the examples of the saints who chose the way of Jesus.

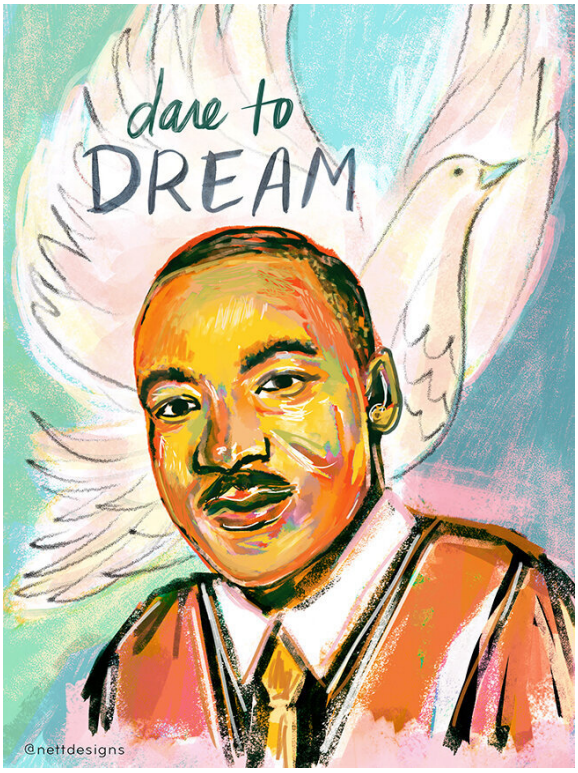
Rev. Joseph Perdue
Senior Minister

January 16, 2022
Prelude: *Adagio,* Mozart - Phil Rinehart
Introit: *My Lord What a Morning,* Traditional Spiritual
Liturgist: Betsy Hyde
Hymn of Praise: *Lift Every Voice & Sing*
Anthem *If I Can Help Somebody,* by Alma Androzzo
Scripture Reading:

Psalm 36:5-10 https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=508936441
John 2:1-11 https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=508936491
Sermon: *In the Name of Love* - Rev. Joseph Perdue
Hymn of Reflection: *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*
Offertory: *Down To The River to Pray* - Phil Rinehart
Hymn of Dedication: *All Hail The Power of Jesus' Name*
Benediction Response: *We Shall Overcome*
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

Sunday, January 16th we will start a special series with our Children's Messages from a book called *Holy Troublemakers*. It is all about a people of

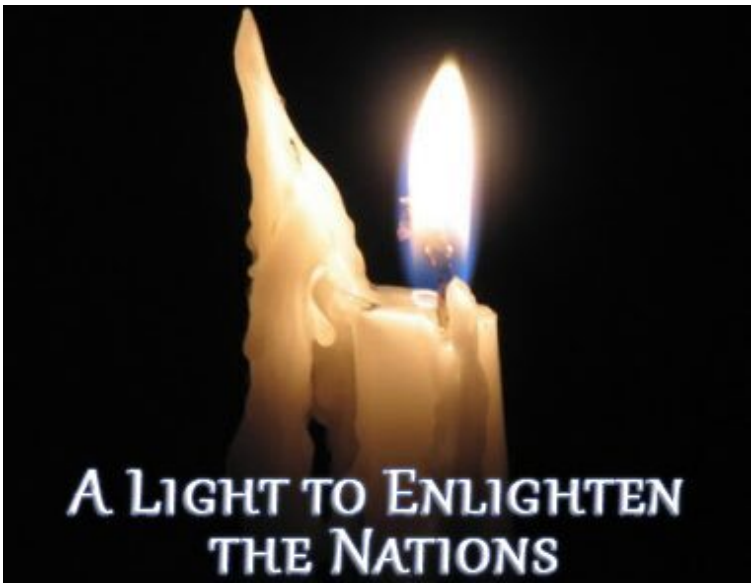
faith who caused all kinds of wonderful trouble to bring some interesting issues to light. This week's is about someone with a very special connection to Martin Luther King, Jr. I encourage you to join us and hear all about it!

At 11:15am on Sunday morning, we'll be having Sunday School over Zoom. We'll be starting a unit on Jesus' teachings and ministry. This week we'll be talking about one of the few stories where we hear about Jesus as a child. Please plan to join us! Zoom link will be sent on Friday with the weekly update email.

Youth Group is underway for 2022 with so many ideas coming from our Youth! For January we are meeting the following dates:
• Sunday, January 16th at 1-2pm: An in person Walk and Talk and a special QUEST. We will meet at the Tabor Trail section of the Shoreline Greenway Trail. We will have a game to play as we Walk and Talk and we'll also make a stop at the Labyrinth on the way back. *As this is an outdoor, in person activity, it will be subject to weather and Covid restrictions*.
• Sunday, January 29th at 4pm: Provided it is safe for us to gather in person, we will have a hot cocoa and cookie bar along with games and a movie. We will also be working to pack treat bags for our Valentine's Love Fest on February 13th.
As soon as we get an "all-clear" on the Covid front, we have outings and great activities ready to go! Keep wearing your masks, social distancing and get your vaccinations if you can! So, we can be back together soon!! Keep your eyes peeled for emails with further information.

In Peace and Health,

Kerry Stewart
Faith Formation Coordinator
kerry@firstcongretationalbranford.org



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.

• January 9: **Baptism of Christ Sunday**: Jesus' Baptism empowers mission, both his and ours. (Luke 3:15-22)
• January 16: **Second Sunday After Epiphany** At Cana, Jesus begins his work of illuminating dark places with a celebration (John 2:1-11)
• January 23: **Third Sunday After Epiphany** Jesus returns home to announce his mission to bring God's justice to the oppressed (Luke 4:14-21)
• January 30: **Fourth Sunday After Epiphany** Jesus' neighbors and former friends become enraged when they realize that God's mercy includes all the wrong people. (Luke 4:21-30)
• February 6: **Fifth Sunday After Epiphany** As Jesus calls his earliest followers, he sets the tone for how he responds to our sin and shortcomings: forgiveness, inclusion, and call. (Luke 5:1-11)

• 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)

37th Annual Branford MLK Breakfast

I hope you will attend this year's Branford MLK Breakfast. Our congregation is supporting the MLK Heritage Committee as financial sponsors, and through my leadership during the worship service.

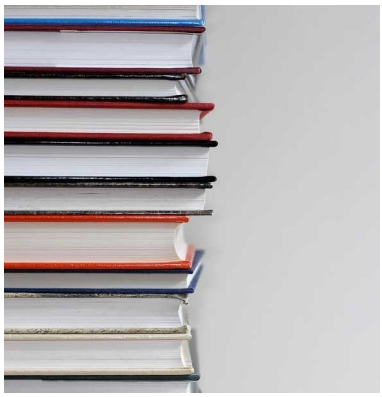
This year's virtual event will feature keynote speaker Chris Wilson, author of "The Master Plan - My Journey from Life in Prison to a Life of Purpose." You may have seen Chris on The Daily Show, Morning Joe, and other TV shows.

You can purchase tickets here.

Rev. Joseph Perdue
Senior Minister

Book Group

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, February 2nd, at 7:00pm via zoom.



The book for our February meeting is The Midnight Library by Matt Haig.

Everyone is welcome!

Barbara Colley

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 January 27th.

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

Happy Birthday to…
Linda Mitchell - January 17th
Tracy Sokoloski - January 18th
We are so happy to have you in our lives!

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), Ethel Marchesseault (Linda's mother), Sylvia O'Brien, Lou Wells

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Life Among the Believers

Sunday, January 16
10:00 am Worship Service (online)

Monday, January 17

Tuesday, January 18

Wednesday, January 19

Thursday, January 20

Friday, January 21

Saturday, January 22

Sunday, January 23
10:00 am Worship Service (online)

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 Philippines

Pray with the Philippines, January 16, 2022

Lectionary Selection: John 2:1-11

Prayers for the Philippines:

Root us O, Lord,
Root us in your glory and mission
Let us find all that we need in the liberating and hopeful spirit of Jesus Christ.
Root us.
Roots that extend in acts of justice for our communities and fight for human rights in all situations.
You are our one true vine O Creator.

Amen

Mission Stewardship Moment from the Philippines:

How can the liberating spirit of Christ transcend the boundaries set in place by centuries of colonial rule? This is a question alive and present within the Philippines and the UCCP who are unpacking, unlearning, and reclaiming their faith under the backdrop of five centuries of Spanish and American colonial rule. Liberation is about placing Christ as the centerpiece. A centerpiece that does not uphold the status quo but instead works for justice and hope for communities. Even in Christian history, the church expanded through colonization. However, because of education and experiences, we have learned to use new tools of discovering, rebuilding, and reclaiming the liberating spirit of the Reign of God. Now, there are churches rooted in their own soil, connected with the people's struggles and aspirations. The UCCP is deeply and wonderfully rooted in their communities. Especially as they celebrate the 73rd anniversary of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and they reassert as a church that "Respect for human rights and defense of human life is profoundly embedded in the fundamental principles of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines…We believe that the Church should serve as a bastion of hope for the reign of justice, peace, and love in the country and the world" (UCCP Bishops Statement Dec. 5, 2021).

Prayer and Mission Moment by Andrew Larsen

Mission Partners in the Philippines

- Dansalan College Foundation
- Northern Christian College
- Silliman University
- Southern Christian College
- Union Theological Seminary
- United Church of Christ in the Philippines

More about the Philippines

Global Ministries Mission Co-worker in the Philippines:
Andrew Larsen 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 Andrew Larsen

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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