Sunday Worship, October 23, 2022, 10am

Twentieth Sunday After Pentecost

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.

Would You Stay or Go?

My family and I had the privilege earlier this month, of visiting Plymouth, Massachusetts. While my children will always say that their favorite part of any travel is the hotel, complete with the “free” breakfast and pool along with the novelty of all sleeping in the same room, I had something else hit me hard and really open my eyes. Along with a visit to the Plimoth Patuxet Museum that has both a Native Patuxet Village along with a Colonial Village and lots of historians as well as interpreters to walk with you as you explore, we visited the Mayflower II. This is a replica of the Mayflower that the Pilgrims sailed to freedom on. They were on board for nearly 60 days, in very tight and unsanitary conditions, and onboard and in the first year here, nearly half of all those on board lost their lives.

One of the questions asked in the interactive exhibit was “Would your stay or would you go?” Would you have been brave enough or desperate enough to risk your life and/or your family’s life for freedom? For life where you believed so much in your faith and how you practice that faith that you would be willing to give up everything you know to go to an unknown place with unknown conditions to start all over.

I don’t like saying it, but I don’t know if I would have. In fact, I doubt I would have. I have become more and more of a risk taker as I have grown older, surer in myself, and less interested in what others think of my failures, or successes, and becoming more adventurous in general. But I’m not sure I’d risk my life for my faith. I am blessed that I don’t need to do that.

Our lives are the result of those who came here under those conditions. And it is up to us to continue to fight for those who find themselves in

the situation of being persecuted for who they are and what they believe. Fighting for Justice: Social, Environmental, Racial, is a huge part of our faith, our tradition. And these people who took that fateful sail are the reason we have the freedoms we have. And it is our responsibility to pass that on.

Kerry Stewart
Faith Formation Coordinator

October 23, 2022
Prelude: Phil Rinehart
Introit: *Precious Lord, Take My Hand* - FCCB Choir
Liturgist: Mindy Yester
Hymn of Praise: *Wind Who Makes All Winds That Blow*
Anthem: *Day By Day,* Martin How - FCCB Choir
Scripture Reading: Joel 2:23-32 https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=533133174
Luke 18:9-14 https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=533133208
Sermon TBD
Hymn of Reflection: *There's a Wideness in God's Mercy*
Hymn of Dedication: *Oh the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus*
Postlude: 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

In Peace and Partnership,

Kerry Stewart
Faith Formation Coordinator
kerry@firstcongregationalbranford.org

Stewardship Moment

It is that time of year when we are presented with the opportunity to respond to the generosity of God by pledging our support to the church's mission to serve others and grow spiritually through the programs provided by our congregation. The theme for this year is **"From Bread and Cup to Faith and Giving"**. God has given us the responsibility of being stewards to His creation and to spread his Love.

We have much to be grateful for with the energy and inspiration of our Senior Minister, Joe Perdue, and our Faith Formation Coordinator, Kerry Stewart, as they have brought creative ideas and programs to assist the church with challenges we face together. If we work with each other in mission, worship, and discipleship, we can continue and expand our Church's mission of love and kindness as Jesus taught us by offering our time and resources.

Sunday, November 13th, is Stewardship Sunday. This week stewardship letters, and pledge cards are being mail. After meditation and prayer, please fill out the pledge cards and bring them to Stewardship Sunday to place them in a basket as a symbol of commitment. There are two pledge cards, our time, and talents and one for your financial commitment. If you prefer, you may also mail them to the office or place them in the box outside the office prior to that time.

It is with great gratitude for all the work and financial support the members and friends have given this past year! Let us move forward in

continuing the commitment we share through the mission of our church!

With Gratitude,

The Discipleship Team
Fred Cotton, Cheryl Tripp, Jennifer McCaughtry, and Cyndie Neely

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Strengthen Your Work for Racial Justice

Saturday, November 5, 10 a.m. - noon:
Creating Change in Your Sphere of Influence

The workshop is designed primarily for white-identified people interested in working for racial justice,and is appropriate for people new to this area of advocacy as well as those who are more experienced.

There is no fee to register.

SOME OPENINGS ARE STILL AVAILABLE FOR THE NOV. 5 EVENT.
https://www.sneucc.org/eventdetail/17019124?month=10&year=2022&day=1&display=m

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Knit, Purl and Pray

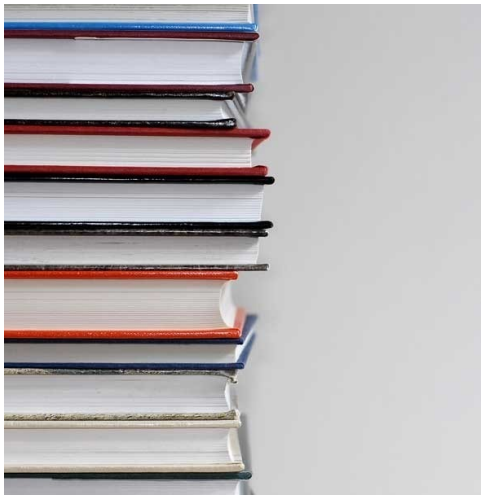
Anyone is welcome whether you can knit or crochet or neither. We can teach you. We make prayer shawls, baby hats, and work on our own craft projects.

We meet on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 10:00 - 11:30 in the Russel Room. Our next session will be October 27th.

Please join us!

Book Group

Here is a list of the books we have chosen:



November 2 – The Silence of the Girls, by Pat Barker

December 7 – The Uncommon Reader, by Alan Bennett

Please plan on joining us when you can. We meet in the Russel Room, at 7 PM.

Barbara Colley

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!

The flowers in our sanctuary were given in loving memory of Vivian Wies, Dr. Fred Wies & Fred Wies Jr., from their family.

For Our Prayers This Week

We give thanks for…
The return to normalcy - step by step

Happy Birthday…
Kerry Stewart - October 17th
Donna Giddings - October 17th
Darcy Macdonald - October 24th
We are so happy to have you in our lives!

Happy Anniversary…
Linda Mitchell & Frank Buggee - October 19th
Sheila & Donald Potter - October 24th
Lynne & David Hoadley - October 26th

Ongoing prayers for…
Charlotte Mangs, Nora Fetcho (friend of Pat Carroll's sister), Richard Barker, Wilbur Wogahn (Paula Pedbereznak's/Tommy's grandfather), Helen Jasinka, Reg Vetrano, Jean Andros, David Reynolds, Ethel Marchesseault (Linda's mother) and Linda's Brother-in-law Charlie, Barbara O'Keefe, Marissa, Betsy Boynton, Ruth Greco (Mae Genovese's sister), Alberto Tirry (friend of Deb Laudano), Jeff Buggee, Philip Rinehart, Bianca Dorsi (Aunt of Betsy Dorsi), Janice Roberts (FCCB CDC), Don Potter, William Chisholm (Teresa Sander's Grandfather), 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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Faith in Action

Sunday, October 23
10:00 am Worship Service – Meetinghouse
No Bible Study this week, will resume October 30th
11:30 am Confirmation Information Session (light lunch served) – Pilgrim Hall
6:00 pm New Haven East Consociation Annual Meeting – Pilgrim Hall & Meetinghouse

Monday, October 24

Tuesday, October 25
7:00 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal – Meetinghouse

Wednesday, October 26
6:00 pm Pub Theology – Stony Creek Brewery

Thursday, October 27
10:00 am Knit, Purl, Pray – Russel Room
7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal – Meetinghouse

Friday, October 28

Saturday, October 29
12:30 Set up for Trunk or Treat/Open House
3:00 pm Truck or Treat – FCCB Parking Circle

Sunday, October 30
10:00 am Worship Service – Meetinghouse
(Apple Pies & Crisps for Sale during coffee hour – Youth Mission Project Fundraiser)

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

FEED BRANFORD KIDS
Hunger lives in your own back yard

Kids Weekend Meal Pick Up

Weekend food for Branford children will be distributed at:

Feed Branford Kids - 33 Business Park Drive

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.

SHORELINE VILLAGE CT

The Shoreline Village Connecticut (SVCT) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to help older people to age in their own homes. It is a part of the national Village movement which began twenty years ago and has spread throughout the world. Current trends indicate that most older people prefer to stay in their own home until it is no longer possible. SVCT provides the opportunity for “younger” seniors to fulfill their need for public service by assisting older members, before they themselves need services.

SVCT is primarily a volunteer organization, with one part-time service coordinator and is in its tenth year of operation. Along with offering services such as transportation to members, SVCT offers a variety of activities designed to engage elders in social interaction, recognizing that isolation and loneliness are major contributors to decline as people age. We offer a book club, walking groups, yoga instruction, social gatherings monthly for conversation, in addition to two large social events per year. Lectures on the arts and various community informational programs complement our services. Several members of the congregation are members.

Safety in the home is essential to preventing falls, the nemesis of older people. SVCT is able to provide a safety assessment to members and non-members and to offer limited financial support for such things as handrails and small home modifications.

The backbone of the organization is our volunteers. These individuals drive members to medical appointments, grocery shopping, and other appointments as needed. They are also available on short notice to help with small tasks such as changing a light bulb or helping with a computer glitch.

For information about joining the Village or becoming a volunteer you may contact Sylvia De Santis at 747-5939 or Kathy Fox at 203-488-8684

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

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 Democratic Republic of Congo.

Pray with the Democratic Republic of Congo, October 23, 2022

Lectionary Selection: Luke 18:9-14

Prayers for the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Loving, Living God,

God, may we come to you
in humility and repentance,
ready to encounter you in love

At times, we see the suffering in the world, and we feel overwhelmed.

We turn to you looking for signs of hope.

We entrust to you the population of Congo. Those who suffer from famine, from injustice, and those who have fled their homes because of the conflicts.

When we see suffering in so many parts of the world, help us to find concrete ways of helping those who are in need and to do so humbly in your Way

You have given us assurance
that the prayers of those who suffer pierce the clouds,
and their cries reach the heavens.

Teach us to be wary of our complacency

Nothing can allow us to justify ourselves before God. None of our actions, no matter how good. It is in a face-to-face in truth, in this movement that goes deep within ourselves, without shadow or artifice, that we can explore our flaws and discover that we need another, need God, his love.

That's when we can get up, stand up.

Our humility allows us to be raised up. If we are raised, it is not to remain passive, but to stand before God, to face the world, and why not become one of those who seek to lift up others.

And help us with as much honesty as possible
to love justice and to seek mercy,
We ask this through your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Mission Stewardship Moment from the Democratic Republic of the Congo

In the city of Goma in the Eastern province of North Kivu, the landscape has changed with new hills that were not there a year ago. In May 2021, the volcano Nyiragongo that overlooks Goma erupted, and thousands of families lost their homes and livelihood. New hills and mounds were formed by the lava that poured into the residential area.

During a recent stay in Goma, I saw families trying to find approximately where their houses were before the eruption to start rebuilding. Many other families are still in tents and are still homeless.

Not far away, there is a new population that has arrived. This time, it was not a natural disaster that drove families from their homes but

rather human greed. A rebel group called M23, backed by the government of Rwanda, started a new offensive last June. Cities have been occupied, and thousands of families have been driven from their homes.

The Church of Christ in Congo and the Protestant service for development and diaconia (SEPRODDIA) have been searching for ways to support the families and the Protestant Churches in the area. Collects were made in the congregations countrywide, and partners such as Global Ministries have also contributed. One of the most important actions is prayer with services organized all over the country.

My work in Goma was to help the team of the province of North ECC on the best way to use the resources that we were able to gather. The needs are tremendous. The families fled with clothes on their backs and lacked everything from food to clothing and even drinking water. There were many children that had health problems and young mothers with infants. More than 200,000 have fled the fighting. In the Goma area, the churches and the schools are used as shelters by more than 1800 families and 8000 persons. The families that had found shelter in schools during the vacation are now looking for other protection since the school year has started. Besides water, which is a necessity for everyone, we tried to determine criteria so that the most vulnerable would be helped. Thanks to the help of many, distributions were made to the families that were the most in need with cornflower, beans, water, cooking oil, blankets, hygienic supplies, and soap.

For the moment, there is no way of knowing when the fighting will end, allowing the families to return to their homes. The international community seems relatively indifferent without sanctions or pressure put on Rwanda. The population has even started protesting against the United Nation forces that they see only as “observers” and not protectors of the civilian population. After 30 years of conflict, it is easy to understand their frustration. The Democratic Republic of Congo is rich in cobalt, coltan, gold, and many other minerals. The Congo has the world’s largest reserves of cobalt and coltan. Cobalt is that precious mineral needed to develop batteries for electric vehicles and coltan for cell phones. In a very cynical way, the conflicts are useful to Congo’s neighbors, who continue the pillage its natural resources. All of the horrors the Congolese population has suffered have never been before the Justice, and the rapports such as the mapping from the United Nations that show the responsibility of its neighbors have seemingly been ignored. There is a drastic need to raise awareness. I was honored

this week to meet Reverend Dr. Denis Mukwege, recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2018. Not only is he a minister in one of the communities of the ECC he is also a gynecologist in charge of the Panzi hospital, which treats women and children survivors of sexual violence. Rape is one of the "weapons" to drive families from their homes to better exploit the minerals. The work at the Panzi hospital involves physical, psychological, and spiritual healing. At the end of our meeting, he requested that we pray for the Congolese population.

Prayer and Mission Moment by Bryan Parrish

Mission Partners in the Democratic Republic of Congo

- Church of Christ in Congo
- Congo Protestant University – Kinshasa
- Community of Disciples of Christ in Congo

Global Ministries Mission Co-worker in the Democratic Republic of the Congo:
Bryan Parrish serves with the Church of Christ in Congo. His appointment is made possible by gifts to the Disciples Mission Fund, Our Church's Wider Mission, and your special gifts.
Make a gift that supports the work of Bryan Parrish

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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AMAZON SMILE DONATIONS

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

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