



**Sunday Worship, November 20, 2022, 10am**

**First Sunday of Advent**

**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.**

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Our Advent theme for this year is “From Generation to Generation...” Throughout the season we will pair a passage from Isaiah with Gospel texts that highlight the human parts of the story and offers a clear, chronological storyline of the events leading up to and following Christ’s birth. Our focal scriptures look at the Christmas story through a micro and macro lens, focusing on both the human interactions and events recorded in the Gospels, as well as the cosmic prophecies in Isaiah.

Our journey through Advent is based on a line from Mary’s song of protest and praise:

*Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty  
One has done great things for me,  
and holy is his name.  
His mercy is for those who fear him  
**from generation to generation.** (Luke 1: 48b-50)*

Despite the challenges and vulnerability she faced, Mary could glimpse the scale and scope of the good news she was part of bringing forth. This good news transcends time and space—it was and is bigger than just her. Christ is coming for collective liberation: God’s redemption is at work for years to come. Therefore, the promise is meant to be lived out and passed on from generation to generation.

We are invited to look at the characters in our scriptures and wonder: What did each character pass on or contribute? How did each character participate in God’s liberation and love? Which characters try to thwart God’s justice and what can we learn from them? What is

our role now? What is our generation's task? What will we carry forth, and what should we leave behind?

From Generation to Generation... reminds us of the ways our lives, histories, actions, and stories are interconnected and woven together. In the midst of narratives, policies, and rhetoric designed to divide us, what does it look like to practice belonging to one another? The work of God is always unfolding— in and through us. This Advent season, how will we carry it forth?

November 27. The First Sunday of Advent. *From Generation to Generation...There is room for every story.* Our series begins with Matthew's genealogy. In that long list of names, we remember the trauma and triumph of those who came before; each name holds a story and their story gives way to Christ's story.

December 4. The Second Sunday of Advent. *From Generation to Generation...God meets us in our fears.* "Do not be afraid" is the most common phrase in all the bible. From generation to generation, God shows up in the midst of our fear and uncertainty and confusion. From generation to generation, faithful people have said "yes" despite apprehension.

December 11. The Third Sunday of Advent. *From Generation to Generation...We can choose A Better Way.* Faced with a choice between mercy and vengeance, God calls us to choose peace over violence, grace over condemnation, and kindness over punishment. God graces us with the courage to choose a better way.

December 18. The Forth Sunday of Advent. *From Generation to Generation...We See God in Each other.* When we stand in solidarity, we see God in one another. From generation to generation, we can see how God is at work in our relationships. The way we see the divine in each other impacts how we live and move in the world. Worship is led by our children and teenagers.

December 21. The Longest Night. This Ecumenical service marks the Winter Solstice, the longest night of the year. We recognize that the joy and expectation of the season can often overshadow the pain and

hurt many experience during the holidays, when the world's merriment puts their grief and sorrow in start relief. This service is hosted at Trinity Episcopal Church at 7pm.

December 23. Handel's Messiah. This year Branford Messiah will resume its long tradition of performing *Handel's Messiah* at FCCB. 7PM.

December 24. Christmas Eve. *From Generation to Generation...We Tell This Story*. We tell this story because we, too, are invited to come to the manger and witness the miracle of birth. We tell this story because it brings us hope and good news—hope especially for those deemed powerless, unworthy, or unwelcome.

December 25. Christmastide. This year Christmas falls on a Sunday. We will worship by livestream rather than in-person so out of respect for our families and children. Worship will be led by the combined choirs and clergy of First Congregational Church and Tabor Lutheran Church.

January 1. The First Sunday After Christmas. *From Generation to Generation...God Dwells With Us*. On this first Sunday of the new year, we will gather around tables to share communion as part of a Brunch Church. Christ's beginning was with God; therefore, Christ has been with us since life began. We celebrate the many ways God dwells with us from generation to generation, since the beginning of time.

January 8. Epiphany Sunday. *From Generation to Generation...We Keep Seeking*. The Magi were seekers. They sought wisdom, they sought the divine, they sought fortunes to tell the future. Like the Magi, may we seek the divine and be willing to journey closer to God. Let us keep seeking—wisdom, justice, and a better world.

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**November 27, 2022**

**Prelude:** *Largo*, Couperin - Phil Rinehart

**Introit:** *Long Ago, Prophets Knew* - FCCB Choir

**Liturgist:** Linda Marchesseault

**Hymn of Praise:** *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

**Anthem:** *Prepare the Way of the Lord*, W. Rowan - FCCB Choir

**Scripture Reading:**

Isaiah 2:1-5 <https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=536218339>

Matthew 1:1-17 <https://bible.oremus.org/?ql=536218371>

**Sermon:** *From Generation to Generation...There's Room for Every Story* - Rev. Joseph Perdue

**Hymn of Reflection:** *In the Bulb There Is a Flower*

**Offertory:** *Generation to Generation* - Katie Jones

**Hymn of Dedication:** *All Who Love and Serve Your City*

**Choral Benediction:** *Long Ago, Prophets Knew* - FCCB Choir

**Postlude:** *Carol*, Daquin - Phil Rinehart

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## 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!

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**Christmas Fair**  
**Donations needed!**



**The stage is now open for all your treasures!**

**Please, no clothing, shoes, TVs, or large household items.**

- Donate items to Golden Nuggets, Books/Music, Children's Toys/Games, Jewelry, Curiosity, or Christmas Revisited.
- Donate to tag sale treasures.

- Make handcrafted items, baked goods, cookies and/or candy.
  - Donate new or re-gifted items for our basket raffle.
  - Decorate wreaths and swags.
- 



### **Faith Formation Focus with Kerry**

Happy New Year! I know, I know. Every year in late November, early December I start with the Happy New Year business! What you may or may not remember is that the first Sunday in Advent is the beginning of the Liturgical Year. We have a poster calendar that we will be using throughout the next year to illustrate how we move through the year and our different seasons with Sunday School. I encourage you to check it out in the Sunday School hallway starting in a couple of weeks.

**Sunday School** this week is a wonderful project we have been planning and working towards for a few months now! We'll be working on our luminaries for Christmas Eve. We need your pictures! Are there people you love, and you want to be celebrate them on Christmas Eve? Is there a name you want to have remembered or honored? The way to have them included is to email it all to me at [kerry@firstcongregationalbranford.org](mailto:kerry@firstcongregationalbranford.org). We will not be using any original photos. You can also bring them with you to the church and we will photo copy them. This project will start during Sunday School and continue through Coffee Hour so everyone will have an opportunity to work on one! We start in Worship and will leave after this week's special Children's Message! Please join us!

**PF Youth Group** meets this Sunday as well, at 3:30 pm. Up this week is a game tournament, complete with prizes and bragging rights as well as a hot chocolate (and maybe frozen hot chocolate) bar! After you are full of turkey and family, come hang out with us Sunday Afternoon. We'll be down in the Youth Group Room. See you Sunday!

**Adult Faith Formation** opportunities continue after Worship on Sunday's. This week, we'll be working on Luminaries for Christmas Eve. On Sunday December 4th and 11th we'll be revisiting a familiar practice. We will be using our From Generation to Generation program materials to reflect on Art, Poetry and Scripture. Please join us at 11:15 in the Russel Room for some quiet, contemplative practice and a chance to slow down and reflect on this very busy season. Contact me with any questions or details.

Finally, **Pageant Sunday** is coming!! This is your last chance to get in on this year's fun!! We have some small speaking roles as well as non-speaking rolls available!! Just let me know what you'd like to do and we'll get you all set. There are no rehearsals this year, so it is a show up and participate pageant. Can't wait to share it with everyone on Sunday, December 18th.

In Peace,

Kerry Stewart

Faith Formation Coordinator

[kerry@firstcongregationalbranford.org](mailto:kerry@firstcongregationalbranford.org)



**Advent: Generation to Generation Luminary Project**

*Luke 1: 39-58:*

*From the moment Mary knocks on Elizabeth's door, Elizabeth recognizes that Christ is growing within Mary's womb. John the Baptist (in Elizabeth's womb) leaps for joy in recognition of the Messiah who will be born, and this moment of connection prompts Mary to break into song.*

**We often see God most clearly in the divine light others carry. These luminaries will be adorned with names and faces of people who bear the Christ-light for us.**

**We need your help to be surrounded by those we love. We will be working starting on Sunday, November 27th making the luminaries. We need two things:**

- **Your Pictures!** Please email (if possible) or bring to the church to be copied photos of your families. **WE WILL NOT BE USING ANY ORIGINAL PHOTOGRAPHS.**
- **Your help:** on Sunday, November 27th and Sunday December 4th we will be working on attaching the photographs to our luminary bags. Please join us in Pilgrim Hall as we work to get them put together during Sunday School and Coffee Hour.

These Luminaries will be displayed as part of our Christmas Eve Service. They will be lit and displayed on our Meetinghouse Steps as we celebrate the light that is Jesus coming into the world on that dark night! And we'll be surrounded by those we love, those who inspire us, those who love us!

***Please email photos to Kerry-  
[kerry@firstcongregationalbranford.org](mailto:kerry@firstcongregationalbranford.org) with a notation for  
"Luminary Project" or email or call her at (203) 488-7201 x 106  
with any questions!***

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## FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION...

### **Advent Programming: From Generation to Generation**

It is hard to believe that we are just over a week before the beginning of Advent, the sacred time of waiting and preparation leading us to Christmas. We have some unique programs planned and hope you will join in with us. This year's theme is *From Generation to Generation*. And it leads us to some amazing opportunities for all ages programming!

*Our first opportunity will be Sunday, November 27th.* During Sunday School we'll be making Luminarias for Christmas Eve Service. We are wanting to surround ourselves with our friends, family, and community, so we are asking for photos of your friends and family to come to the church by Sunday, November 27th. We will be copying or printing them and then putting them on our luminarias. We will start this project on November 27th during Sunday School and continue into Coffee Hour. **Please send your pictures to Kerry at [kerry@firstcongregationalbranford.org](mailto:kerry@firstcongregationalbranford.org) or drop them off for copying. We will not be using any originals for this project.**

*Our second opportunity will be on Sunday December 4th and 11th.* We will have an adult study opportunity that will include a study of scripture, art, and poetry through Lectio Divina, Visio Divina and Sacred Imagination. This will be at 11:15am, after Worship and Coffee Hour in the Russel Room.

*Our third opportunity will be on Sunday December 18th.* Our Annual Christmas Pageant! This is an opportunity for all God's Children, of all ages to join in the fun. This year we are doing a "Pick up Pageant" that will have people of all ages having the chance to participate.



## **Where does Jesse Tree come from?**

The Jesse Tree tradition is rooted in Isaiah 11:1: “A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.” Jesse was the father of David, Israel’s greatest king. And Jesus is descended from the line of David. He is the branch God promised would grow from Jesse’s family tree. Each symbol represents a story from within this family tree and a step toward the birth of Jesus.

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## **Cookie Walk**



## **Christmas Fair Cookie Walk**

The Christmas Fair Cookie Walk is happening once again this year, and we’re looking for bakers who are willing to bake and donate two big batches (6-10 dozen) of cookies! The sign-up sheet is posted on the bulletin board in Pilgrim Hall along with an informational sheet for each baker and some recipe ideas, if needed.

Contact Peggy Keck @ 203-641-9518 with any questions.

Thank you!!

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## CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

IN MEMORY OF.....

IN HONOR OF .....

NAME.....

(PLEASE INDICATE NAME(S) AS THEY SHOULD APPEAR IN BULLETIN.)

CONTACT NAME.....

TELEPHONE.....

PLEASE CHECK ONE:

Deliver my plant to a homebound person

I will take my plant home after worship December 25th

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Cost: \$12.00—Please make checks payable to First Congregational Church and note Poinsettia in the memo line.

Please drop this form in the collection plate or at the Church office.

**Deadline 12/9/2022**

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## DONATE A WREATH

IN MEMORY OF.....

IN HONOR OF.....

NAME.....

(PLEASE INDICATE NAME(S) AS THEY SHOULD APPEAR IN BULLETIN)

CONTACT NAME.....

TELEPHONE.....

These wreaths will adorn the Meetinghouse for the Holidays.

Cost: \$15.00—Please make checks payable to First Congregational Church *and note Wreath in the memo line.*

Please drop this form in the collection plate or at the Church office.

**Deadline 12/9/2022**





# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BRANFORD

**97TH ANNUAL CHRISTMAS FAIR  
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3RD, 2022 9AM-2PM**

CANDY HOMEMADE GIFTS PERSONALIZED GIFTS  
JAMS COOKIE WALK CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS  
WREATHS & SWAGS GIFT BASKETS JEWELRY  
BOOKS/PUZZLES TAG SALE TREASURES GRAB 'N' GO  
USED TOYS & GAMES CHRISTMAS REVISITED LUNCHEON  
JELLIES

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FREE  
ADMISSION

FOOD AVAILABLE  
TO PURCHASE

SILENT  
AUCTION

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**1009 MAIN STREET  
203.488.7201**

[www.firstcongregationalbranford.org](http://www.firstcongregationalbranford.org)



**Caretaker Search**

There is an opening for the position of Caretaker at Killam's Point Conference Center. We are currently preparing a job description and forming a search committee.

Please reach out Rev. Joe if you are interested in serving on the search committee or if you have any questions.



TEL (203) 481-4248 | FAX (203) 483-7727  
342 Harbor Street, Branford, CT 06405

Dear Friends,

Here at Branford Counseling & Community Services, our top priority is serving the community through programs like Secret Santa. This year, we have made the decision to **give out only retail store gift cards** (e.g., Walmart, Kohl's, Target, etc.) to families in the program. Families can shop for their own personalized gifts in whatever method they choose - in person, online, or curbside pick-up.

If you are able to donate, we ask that you kindly donate **only retail store gift cards** (increments of \$50 dollars or more are preferred). Unfortunately, due to the formatting of this year's program, we will not be able to match up donors with particular recipient requests (e.g., number of children in a family, ages, etc.). In addition, we are not able to accept any donations of actual gifts or supplies such as wrapping paper. We recommend making your donation by no later than **Wednesday, November 30, 2022** to allow for shopping and delivery time.

Please mail your donation to: **Branford Counseling & Community Services, 342 Harbor Street, Branford, CT 06405 ATTN: Secret Santa** or drop it in the locked mailbox located outside our rear entrance.

For any questions, please call our Secret Santa Hotline at (203) 401-1264. Thank you for your continued generosity.

Warmest wishes for a happy and safe holiday season!

Sincerely,



Peter Cimino, M.S., L.P.C.  
Executive Director

## Secret Santa Donor Form 2022

### Donor

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is: Name of Retail Store(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Gift Card(s) amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(increments of \$50 dollars or more are preferred)

Any donation is greatly appreciated!

Please complete and return this form by **Wednesday, November 30, 2022**. Please mail this form to:

*Branford Counseling & Community Services  
342 Harbor Street  
Branford, CT 06405  
ATTN: Secret Santa*

OR drop it in locked mailbox located outside our rear entrance.

For any questions, please call Secret Santa Hotline at (203) 401-1264. Thank you for your generosity.



### For Office Use Only

#### Donation

Amount

Retail Gift Card

#### Thank you Note

Sent

## Branford Messiah Performance

Please join us on Friday, December 23rd, at 7:30 PM  
for the 33rd Performance of the Branford Messiah!

First Congregational Church of Branford  
1009 Main Street, Branford

Register Now for our Pre-Holiday  
Mini-Session!

**kidshUGS**

KidshUGS is a non-profit that supports children ages 5-16 who have a parent with cancer or other serious illness. We help kids & families explore and express feelings while cultivating a sense of shared emotions with other families facing equally difficult circumstances.

Is your family coping with the changes that come with a parent's serious illness or disability? This can feel even harder around Holiday time. KidshUGS offers support in a warm community environment.

Visit us at [kidshugs.org](http://kidshugs.org) to find out more about us and to register for our program! 11/14, 11/28, 12/12 at the Community Center in Guilford.

For more information or if you have any questions, please contact us at 203-343-0419, email [info@kidshugs.org](mailto:info@kidshugs.org) or register at [www.kidshugs.org](http://www.kidshugs.org).



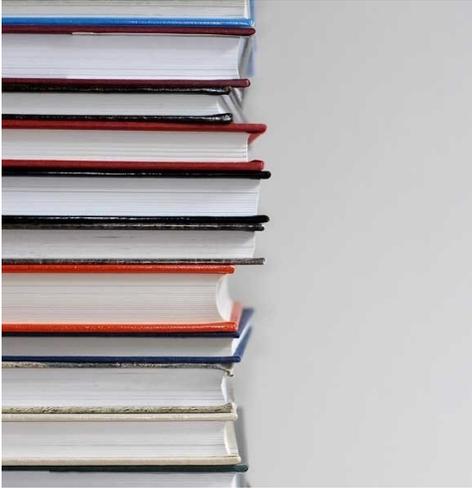
### **Knit, Purl and Pray**

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 sessions will be December 8th & December 22nd.

*Please join us!*

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## **Book Group**

Here is the book we have chosen:

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

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## **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!

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*The flowers in our sanctuary were given in memory of  
Cathleen Mooney Grantland, by Jen McCaughtry.*



## **For Our Prayers This Week**

### **We give thanks for...**

The return to normalcy - step by step

### **Ongoing prayers for...**

Betsy Dorsi, Carol Hoadley, 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, 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), 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, November 27

10:00 am Worship Service - Meetinghouse

11:15 am Advent: Generation to Generation Luminary Project - Pilgrim Hall

4:00 pm Youth Group Game Night - FCCB

### Monday, November 28

### Tuesday, November 29

7:00 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal Meetinghouse

### Wednesday, November 30

### Thursday, December 1

7:00 pm Choir Rehearsal Meetinghouse

### Friday, December 2

### Saturday, December 3

FCCB Christmas Fair - FCCB

### Sunday, December 4

10:00 am Worship Service - Meetinghouse



**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

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### **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](http://www.feedbranfordkids.org), or find @feedbranfordkids on Facebook.

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## 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

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### **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](http://www.branfordmicrofund.org) . Brochures are also available in the Church office. Remember, all inquiries are completely confidential.

*Betsy Gay*  
*Norb Church*  
*Chip Marsh*

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## **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 Lebanon.

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### **Pray with Lebanon, November 27, 2022**

**Lectionary Selection** Matthew 24:36-44

#### **Prayers for Lebanon**

Our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, almighty and only God, whose ways are unknowable, but whose care ever surrounds us, in these uncertain days across the world we pray today for Lebanon: for the people whose lives are entrenched in the sorrows of an unstable life, unable to look forward with the smallest measure of hope.

We intercede for those who have set their hopes on life elsewhere, whose only thought is to find work outside Lebanon. We intercede for

those who are willing to die on the open seas as they flee the misery of life in Lebanon. We intercede for those desperate ones who are willing to die in order to withdraw own their money for life-saving medical treatment for loved ones. We intercede for the broken hearts and broken families who are scattered to the winds because of their uncaring and self-absorbed leaders. Keep your church in Lebanon awake and ready to live for you, to show your truth and goodness in all it does, prepared to receive you at any time, whether in caring for the least of your brothers and sisters, or in greeting your return as the bright-shining Star who even now illuminates this present darkness. In the name of Christ Jesus, Amen.

### **Mission Stewardship Moment from Lebanon**

The early reports in September were that over 20 migrants perished in an un-seaworthy boat off the northern coast of Lebanon – Lebanese, Palestinians, Syrians. The number of the dead grew, bit by bit, until it reached nearly 150, with only 20 or so survivors from that death boat. They considered the risky voyage as a small price to pay – in addition to the thousands of dollars they paid to human traffickers – for this journey away from their misery, which, they were assured, would be “like a vacation”. And still, there are many more who are determined to leave Lebanon by the same method, willing to risk death or the death of their family members in the process.

In a place like Lebanon where people’s dignity is routinely trodden underfoot, the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, along with Haigazian University, partner bodies to the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), steadfastly seek ways to elevate the dignity of God’s beloved. Dealing with the near total absence of municipal electricity in the country, it has pushed forward solar power installations in a number of its institutions, eventually including all of them. This does not just have a positive environmental impact, but it also frees resources to be used to benefit the students at its schools.

For the past three years, the Union’s Armenian Evangelical schools in Lebanon have been collecting only a few dollars from parents as a

symbolic annual tuition payment. To forestall an education deficit among Lebanon's young people, Haigazian University has put in place a similar scheme, in order to keep tuition payments low, while filling the large gap with generous scholarship grants funded by numerous donors, including alumni, friends, Global Ministries and the Armenian Missionary Association of America.

In October, renowned Lebanese actress, psychologist and drama therapist, Zeina Daccache, screened her 2021 film, "The Blue Inmates", at Haigazian University. The film highlights the plight of Lebanese who are imprisoned with mental health illness yet are left untreated. Daccache is not only bringing her skills in drama therapy to help that group of inmates, she is also bringing to the fore the need for legal reform to enable prisoners to be treated for their illness and then return to their families and daily lives.

Indeed, many Lebanese would consider living in this country as a type of mass incarceration, but the Lord Jesus' command to his church has always been the same: to "stay awake". When believers can regard every difficulty and every challenge as an opportunity to minister to Jesus himself, they will bring the hope of the gospel to a hurting society such as this.

*Prayer and Mission Moment by Nishan Bakalian*

Mission Partners in Lebanon:

- Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees
- Forum for Development, Culture, and Dialogue (FDCD)
- Haigazian University
- National Evangelical Church of Beirut
- National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon
- Near East School of Theology
- Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East

[More about Lebanon](#)

**Global Ministries Mission Co-workers in Lebanon**

*Nishan and Maria Bakalian serve with the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East, headquartered in Lebanon.*

*Their appointments are 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 Nishan and Maria Bakalia*

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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.

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## **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](mailto: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!**

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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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