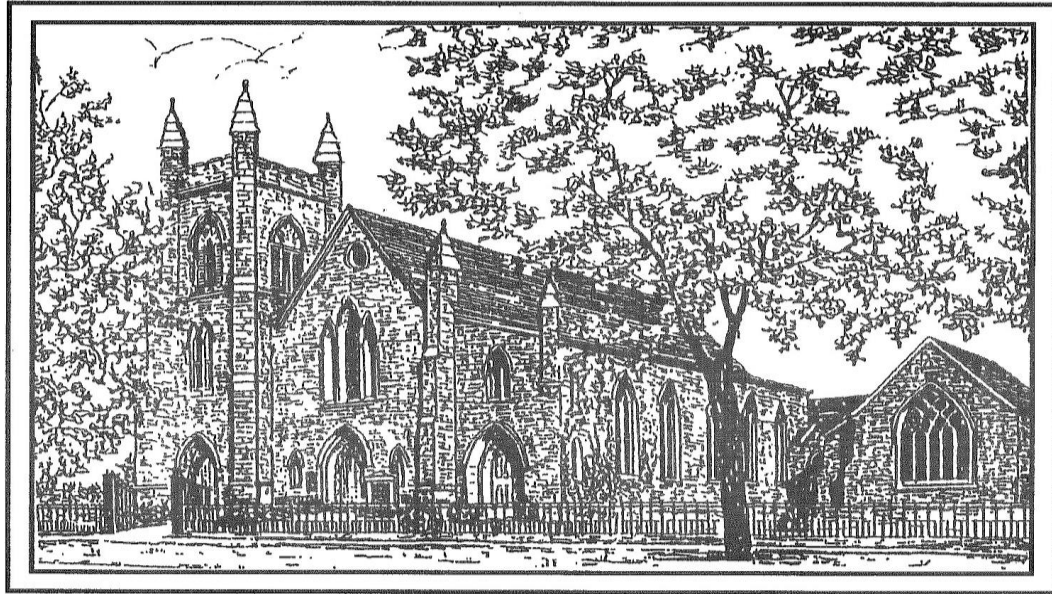


First Congregational Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



Founded in 1680

Living the Love and Justice of Jesus

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
CHRISTMAS PAGEANT
DECEMBER 22, 2024 ~ 10:00 am

Gathering Music

Welcome and Announcements

Ring of the Bell

Prelude

“O Come, O Come Emanuel”

arr. G Hope

Bringing Forth the Light of Christ

Acolytes

*Call to Worship

One: Love deeply, creating wells of kinship,

Many: for in the Body of Christ we belong.

One: Love boldly, like the spirited colors of a rainbow,

Many: for in the Body of Christ we find peace.

One: Love joyfully, like the blissful songs in the wind,

Many: for in the Body of Christ we claim our connections.

*Invocation

Holy God, who weaves together the tapestry of our lives and the patches of our memories. We cherish the pieces of our diverse stories, and the beauty of narratives sewed together. We honor the ways these Holy Threads have connected us. May our lives be like a quilt to our souls, keeping us warm in this season of reflection. Amen.

The Lighting of the Third Advent Candle

Introduction

Today on the final Sunday in Advent, we complete our reflections on the theme of hope, which centers us as we wait with eager expectation for the glory of God to be revealed.

One: John 3:16 reads: “For God so loved the world that God gave God’s Son.” God so loved the world—all of the world, not just certain humans, not just certain regions, not just certain animals or plants. The author of the Epistle to the Romans reminds us that “all of creation awaits with eager expectation for the glory to be revealed.” The birds wait; the trees wait; and the oceans wait. God so loved all of this world, and our hope should be in redemption for all of creation.

Many: **As we light this candle of love, let us center our love and hope on all of creation. (candle lit)**

*Hymn

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

PH #110

The Old Testament Reading

Micah 5:2-5a

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore, he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth, and he shall be the one of peace.

Reader: For the Word of God in Scripture,
for the Word of God among us,
for the Word of God within us

ALL: THANKS BE TO GOD!

The Gospel Reading

Luke 1:39-45, (46-55)

In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord.”

And Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for God has looked with favor on the lowly state of this servant. Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is God’s name, whose mercy is from generation to generation. The Mighty One has shown strength with their arm, has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts, has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly. God has filled the hungry with good things, has sent the rich away empty, and has come to the aid of Israel, in remembrance of God’s mercy and according to the promise made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

Reader: For the Word of God in Scripture,
for the Word of God among us,
for the Word of God within us

ALL: THANKS BE TO GOD!

The Christmas Presentation on the Nativity of Jesus Christ

Cast (in order of appearance)

Narrator/Angel Gabriel: Brady Halt Harcourt

Mary: Bella Crouse

Joseph: Liam Donovan

Innkeeper/Goat: Teddy Brosnihan

Star: Raymond Harrington

Shepherd #1: Tekla Bailey

Shepherd #2: Sam Halt Harcourt

Shepherd #3: Gabriel Crouse

Sheep: Grace Donovan

Angel: Ellie Donovan

Wise People: Avery Walsh, Katie Evans, Xochitl Quezada-Grant

Written by Katherine Harcourt and Amy Halt

Music with Nikita Zabinski, Director of Music

***Hymn**

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

PH #134

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

The Pastoral Prayer

Our Lord’s Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Prayer Response

**Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
send us love, send us power, send us grace.**

Offertory Invitation

The Offertory

“Christmas is Coming”

Joel Raney

***The Doxology** PH #515

Old Hundredth

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

***Prayer of Dedication**

God of Holy Darkness and Returning Light, we give our full hearts, knowing that you will bless this world with love. We give our full minds, knowing that you will bless this world with peace. We give our full souls, knowing that you will bless this world with hope. May the joy of your gifts encourage us to share the best we have, creating your realm here on earth. Amen.

Hymn

“My Soul Gives Glory to My God”

NCH#119

***Benediction**

***Benediction Response**

*Amen, amen,
Amen, amen, amen.*

Carrying the Light of Christ into the World

***Postlude**

"Danny Boy"

Weatherly

*~ Leading Worship today is the Rev. Dr. Nancy Hamlin Soukup ~
~ Our Organist is Nikita Zabinski ~
~ Our greeters today are Janine Beausoleil, Eleanor Ingraham & Clifford Gustafson ~*

Please join us for fellowship hour following Worship



Prayer List for Sunday, December 22, 2024

As a congregation, we lift up prayers today and throughout the week for the following people.

For concerns in the world:

For all the citizens of Syria and for all in areas of conflict.

For those in need of healing on our prayer list:

Jim Morgan

Sue Moreira, who is in Hospice Care

Barbara Malony, Barbara Ringland's mother

Mary Costa, who had surgery at Boston Children's Hospital

Mark

Mary Aberg for her Shoulder Surgery

Jeannine Marshall, Charlotte Burnham's cousin,

Jane Texada, a childhood friend of Sug Grant, who is mourning the loss of her husband

Stephen

Jacob Johnson in Seattle and his Girlfriend Emma who is Under the Sea in a submarine.

Kathy, Beverly Larson's cousin, who is recovering after a hospitalization

Charlie

Ken Latham in Leicester, MA, who started chemo last Thursday for Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma

Fred Z. in CT

Those who have lost their way that they may have wisdom, courage, and strength

Harriet

Lola, Carolina Bailey's sister with stage 4 Pancreatic Cancer

Ryan

Mark E., who has an aggressive form of prostate cancer

Fred Davis, who has stomach cancer

Meriel Smith

Charlotte Griffith

Bob and Sally Evans

Barbara and Jack Ringland

Kellie and Juan Morales's daughter

Peter Leiche, a friend of Sue Moreira, who has cancer
Bruce C., who is in rehab, and Pat P., both friends of Ed Wiacek
Caregivers in our congregation

Upcoming Birthdays:

Diane Swire 12/22	Rev. Nancy Soukup 12/27	
Jack Ringland 1/1	Adria Sartrys 1/16	Steve Walsh 1/17
Lisa Andrade 1/18	Karen Griffith-Dieterich 1/21	Ryan Gamon 1/23
Mikey McGowan- Roach 1/23		Anne Archibald 1/27
Mike Oglo 1/28	Jarrod Riccio 1/28	Meredith Stone 1/16
Anthony Morettini 1/29	Sally Evans 1/31	



What's on the Church Calendar

December 22, 2024	Sunday Worship: Christmas Pageant 10:00am
December 23, 2024	Monday Facility meeting 7:00pm
December 24, 2024	Christmas Eve Worship 6:00pm
December 29, 2024	Sunday Worship 10:00am
January 02, 2025	THURSDAY ANNUAL REPORTS DUE
January 05, 2025	Sunday Confirmation/ Baptism Worship and lunch to following
January 07, 2025	Tuesday Prayer Shawl Circle 6:30pm
January 08, 2025	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)
January 09, 2025	Thursday Deacons meeting 7:00pm Guiteras House
January 10 & 11	Friday & Saturday Bristol Stone Church Coffee House DeWolf room
January 12, 2025	Sunday Worship: First Sunday after Epiphany 10:00am
January 14, 2025	Senior Luncheon
	Tuesday Facility meeting 7:00pm DeWolf room
January 15, 2025	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)
January 19, 2025	Sunday Worship: First Sunday after Epiphany 10:00am
January 21, 2025	Tuesday Church Council Meeting 7:00pm
January 22, 2025	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)
January 10 & 11	Saturday Bristol Stone Church Coffee House DeWolf room
January 26, 2025	Sunday Worship: First Sunday after Epiphany 10:00am
	Congregational Annual meeting following worship
January 29, 2025	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)

CHRISTMAS 2024 AT



AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

300 High Street, Bristol, RI 02809

Christmas Eve Worship

Readings, Carols, and Holy Communion

December 24th at 6:00pm

Officiating will be Rev. Dr. Nancy Hamlin Soukup



The First Congregational Church
Annual Meeting... is fast approaching.

All Committee Chairs

REPORTS DUE JANUARY 2, 2024

The Report will be available to the church membership by January 12th.
Annual Meeting will be Sunday January 26, 2025, following Worship in the
Church Sanctuary.

Please visit our website for more information about the Church
And Events go to **fccbristol.org**



“Invitation to Share Time, Talent, and Treasure”

When you give to First Congregational Church, you make possible our ministries that serve all God’s people. Your gifts share the love of Jesus all year long. The act of giving is our personal expression of worship and also keeps our church financially healthy. Stewardship is not payment for services rendered. It is an act of faith and devotion to God. You may go to the following link to give now:

<https://fccbristol.org/support-us/>.



Church Office Hours are Tuesday – Friday 9:00am – 2:00pm

Office e-mail address: office@FCCBristol.org

Pastoral Office Hours Tuesday – Thursday, 9am – 1pm

You may also schedule an appointment by contacting Rev. Nancy.

Church office line 401/253-7288 or e-mail office@FCCbristol.org


NCH = New Century Hymnal (black hymnal) and PH = Pilgrim Hymnal (red hymnal)

Sources and Credits: Hymn tune names - as well as composers of the music and authors of the text - are listed in the hymnals with each hymn. CCLI License #1958911 and One License.Net #A-728124.

Sources: Prayers from this service were written by or adapted from the following: Joanna Harader, <http://spaciousfaith.com/>, re:Worship: Advent 3 B (re-worship.blogspot.com); Christine Odell, Companion to the Lectionary, Vol. 4, Church of Scotland, Starters for Sunday website, re:Worship: Prayers of the People: Advent 3 B (re-worship.blogspot.com); Rev. Michelle L. Torigian, Abolish to Establish: Service Prayers for the Fourth Sunday of Advent Year C, Advent 4C - December 22 - United Church of Christ; Roddy Hamilton, New Kilpatrick Church, <http://www.nkchurch.org.uk/>, re:Worship: Advent 4 C; and the Rev. Mia M. McClain, Ancient Ruins...Everlasting Covenant: Service Prayers for the Third Sunday of Advent Year B, Advent 3B - December 17 - United Church of Christ (ucc.org).

For the month of December 2024

THIS SEASON WE'RE
Blooming & Giving




STOP&SHOP

This season, let your purchase do more. Head over to our selected Stop & Shop location this month and purchase a specially marked \$10.99 Bloomin' 4 Good Bouquet. Every bouquet sold will send us a \$1 donation!


stopandshop.2giveocal.com
Bloomin' 4 Good Program

Benefiting:



First Congregational Church in Bristol
281 High Street
Bristol, RI 02809
O: 401-253-7288
Office @ FCCBristol.org

At This Stop & Shop Location:



605 Metacom Ave.
Bristol, RI 02809

“Remembering Sisters”

Quilt Raffle
78” x 91”

**Tickets sell for \$1 each
or 6 tickets for \$5**



On sale at the First Congregational Church office, after Sunday services, at the Harvest Moon Bazaar Nov. 23rd, and by many church members.



This quilt was made by Sandra Reynolds, a member of the First Congregational Church in Bristol RI.

Fabrics in this Quilt were purchased in Sisters, Oregon, a town known as the “Quilting Capital” of the Northwest and the host of one of the largest Quilt shows on the west coast every July. Sandra and her husband Keith had headed to the Northwest as Keith had grown up there.

The fabric colors chosen reflected the beautiful colors of early fall that Sandra saw. Thus, the name reflects that wonderful town of Sisters in Oregon!





A Community Partners Program with Clements Marketplace

As many know, Clements Marketplace has opened a third location at 1150 Hope Street in Bristol. As they have in Portsmouth and Manomet in Plymouth, MA, Clements is extending their Community Partners Program to their new location. Twenty-seven years ago, they began this effort to support organizations and groups in the area.

How does it work?: As a registered Community Partner, First Congregational Church (FCC) will collect any Clements’ Marketplace receipts from members’ shopping. When these receipts total \$2500.00, we send the receipts to Clements. (The total is taken from before sales tax and after any Clements’ Shoppers Card savings, coupons, and discounts.) Within 30 days, we will receive a check for a percentage of the total of submitted register receipts. Since 1997, this program has allowed Clements’ family of stores to donate approximately \$800,000 to an array of non-profit organizations.

Where do I drop off my receipts?: At FCC, an envelope for receipts will be pinned to one of the bulletin boards in the Wardwell Room or in the Narthex, starting Sunday, October 27. Or you can drop them off to the office. The receipts collected and tallied.

Plases save those Clements’ receipts and join with us in their Community Partners Program to benefit FCC!