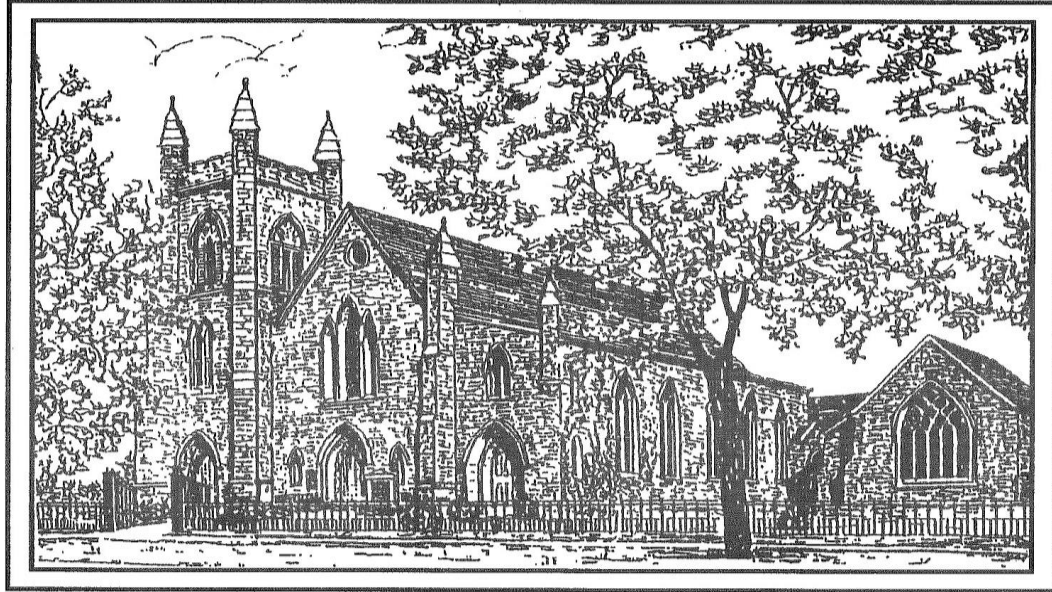


# First Congregational Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



Founded in 1680

*Living the Love and Justice of Jesus*

## FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS A CELEBRATION OF THE NEW YEAR

DECEMBER 29, 2024 ~ 10:00 am

**Gathering Music**

**Welcome and Announcements**

**Ringling of the Bell**

**Prelude**

*“Voluntary in F Major”*

Composer: J. Stanley

**Bringing Forth the Light of Christ**

Acolytes

**\*Call to Worship**

One: Friends, rejoice! Know that you are beloved and precious to God!

**Many: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!**

One: The hungry of the cities, the small towns, the countryside are precious to God:

**Many: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!**

One: The sick are precious to God:

**Many: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!**

One: Prisoners are precious to God:

**Many: For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all!**

One: Time is precious to God:

**Many: May our worship as we approach a New Year sow seeds of justice in this world, so that all who are precious to God may reap God’s blessings upon them. Amen.**

### **\*Invocation**

**O God, who makes all things new, you promise that the former things will pass away. And so we call on you in this New Year to:**

- **exile hunger,**
- **starve the greed that feeds economic inequality,**
- **deport vengeance,**
- **silence lies,**
- **ambush hatred,**
- **change the hearts of those who profit from turning us against one another,**
- **declare wars over,**
- **delight in ways to share resources,**
- **dismantle privilege, and**
- **overcome death.**

Let all of these former things pass away, and in the fertile soil of what is left behind in their passing, let us sow compassion and reap justice. Amen.

### **\*Hymn**

*“Awake, My Soul Stretch Every Nerve”*

PH#362

### **The New Testament Reading**

Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill and a time to heal; a time to break down and a time to build up; a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance; a time to throw away stones and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek and a time to lose; a time to keep and a time to throw away; a time to tear and a time to sew; a time to keep silent and a time to speak; a time to love and a time to hate; a time for war and a time for peace. What gain have the workers from their toil? I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. God has made everything suitable for its time and has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; moreover, it is God’s gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil.

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**

Matthew 25:31-46

“When the Son of God comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the Son will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, you who are blessed by Abba, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?’ And the Son will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.’ Then he

will say to those at his left hand, ‘You who are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels, for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not take care of you?’ Then he will answer them, ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ And these will go away into eternal punishment but the righteous into eternal life.”

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!**

**\*Hymn**

*“Now Greet the Swiftly Changing Year”*

NCH #431

**Sermon “For Everything There Is a Season”—A Dialogue Sermon for the New Year**

One: For everything there is a season:

**Many: And a time for every matter under heaven.**

One: A time to be born and a time to die.

**Many: A time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted.**

One: A time to break down, and a time to build up.

**Many: A time to weep and a time to laugh.**

One: A time to keep and a time to throw away.

**Many: A time to be silent and a time to speak.**

One: A time to love and a time to hate.

**Many: A time for war and a time for peace.**

One: God has made everything suitable for its time.

**Many: God has put a sense of past and future into our minds.**

One: God has done this, so that all should stand in awe before God’s wonder.

**Many: Whatever God does endures forever. Amen.**

**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**

*“Les Tourbillons”*

Composer: J. Rameau

**\*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**

**Eternal God, you call us to ventures, of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with courage, not knowing where we go but only that your hand is leading us, and your love supporting us. Amen**

**Hymn**

*“Our God, Our Help in Ages Past”*

PH #1

**\*Benediction**

**\*Benediction Response**

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

**Carrying the Light of Christ into the World**

**\*Postlude**

*“Toccata in C Major, BWV 564”*

Composer: J.S. Bach

*~ Leading Worship today is the Rev. Dr. Nancy Hamlin Soukup ~*

*~ Our Organist is Thomas Bowers ~*

*~ Our greeters today are Janine Beausoleil, Eleanor Ingraham & Clifford Gustafson ~*

*Please join us for fellowship hour following Worship*



**Prayer List for Sunday, December 29, 2024**

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

**For concerns in the world:**

**For those in need of healing on our prayer list:**

Jim Morgan

Tyler P., who has cancer

Barbara Malony, Barbara Ringland's mother

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

Mark

Mary Aberg for her rehab from 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

**For those who have died**

Sue Moreira, who died on Christmas Day, and for her family who mourn her loss

**Upcoming Birthdays:**

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**

January 01, 2024	NEW YEAR'S DAY
January 02, 2025	THURSDAY ANNUAL REPORTS DUE
<b>January 05, 2025</b>	<b>Sunday Worship Baptism/Confirmation and Holy Communion</b>
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)
<b>January 12, 2025</b>	<b>Sunday Worship: First Sunday after Epiphany 10:00am</b> Ground Hog Band Rehearsal after worship (Diamond Room)
January 14, 2025	Tuesday Facility meeting 7:00pm (DeWolf Room)
January 15, 2025	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)
<b>January 19, 2025</b>	<b>Sunday Worship: Second Sunday after Epiphany 10:00am</b> Ground Hog Band Rehearsal after Worship (Dimond Room)
January 21, 2025	Tuesday Church Council Meeting 7:00pm (DeWolf Room)
January 22, 2025	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)
January 25, 2024	Saturday Bristol Stone Church Coffee House (DeWolf Room)
<b>January 26, 2025</b>	<b>Sunday Worship: Third Sunday after Epiphany 10:00am</b> Congregational Annual meeting following Worship Ground Hog Band Rehearsal after worship (Dimond Room)
January 29, 2025	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)



# 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 12<sup>th</sup>.  
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](https://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](mailto: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](mailto: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 for this liturgy were written by or adapted from the following: Stephanie Dorsey, The First Things: Prayers for New Year’s Day, New Year’s Liturgy-January 1 - United Church of Christ; Joyce Rupp, ©January 2024, <http://www.joycerupp.com/newyears2004.html>, re: Worship: A New Year Blessing; Rev. Thomas Weitzel, Liturgies by TLW: <https://christinejerrett.wordpress.com/>, re: Worship: A Prayer for the New Year; Cara Heafey, <http://worshipwords.co.uk/new-year-blessing-cara-heafey-uk/>, re: Worship: New Year Blessing.*



The Groundhog is coming. *This is an invitation to join the First Congregational Church 30th Annual Groundhog Day*  
 February 3, 2025,  
 Snow date February 9,

The groundhog is safely asleep in his underground chamber. It is up to us to awaken him on Sunday, February 4, 2024. Snow date is February 9, 2025.

The Groundhog Band will started rehearsals every Sunday at 11:15 in the Dimond Room until the performance. The full schedule is below.

If you do not have your instrument or music, please see me. If you need to borrow an instrument, accommodations can be made with help from Mt Hope High and KMS music departments.

All instrumentalists are invited, no matter your experience. If you know someone who plays or played an instrument, give them a shove toward the rehearsal.

When we meet, we will rehearse in the church, play for the gathering music, play the hymns during the service, and then head for the Veterans Home for an 11:45 performance. Vocalists are encouraged to attend and sing with the band for the veterans.

Remember: "Every note you give us is one more note that we have, that we would not have without you."

Bennett Burnham  
 253-8530 HBur700343@aol.com

Rehearsal and Performance Schedule will be listed

January 19<sup>th</sup> After Worship in Dimond room  
 January 26<sup>th</sup> After Worship in Dimond room  
 February 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday at 9:00am in the s  
 February 2<sup>nd</sup> 8:00am before Church  
 February 2<sup>nd</sup> 10:00am Worship

Snow Date February 9<sup>th</sup> Saturday at 9:00am in the s  
 February 9<sup>th</sup> 8:00am before Church  
 10:00am Worship  
 11:45am Veterans home.

Church Office (401) 253-7288 •  
 Office@FCCBristol.org •

Church location 300 High St. • Office location 281  
 High Street • Bristol, Rhode Island 02809

## Bristol's Stone Church Coffeehouse Presents

*An Evening of Americana Music Featuring*  
**Rani Arbo & daisy mayhem**



**Saturday, January 25, 2025**

Doors open at 6:45pm  
 Music starts at 7:30pm

**First Congregational Church**  
 300 High Street  
 (Corner of Bradford and High St)  
 Bristol, RI 02809

Tickets are \$25.00; Students are Half Price; Children 5 and Under are Free  
 Seating is Limited and Early Reservations are Recommended.  
 Please Call 401-253-4813 for reservations or ticket information.

