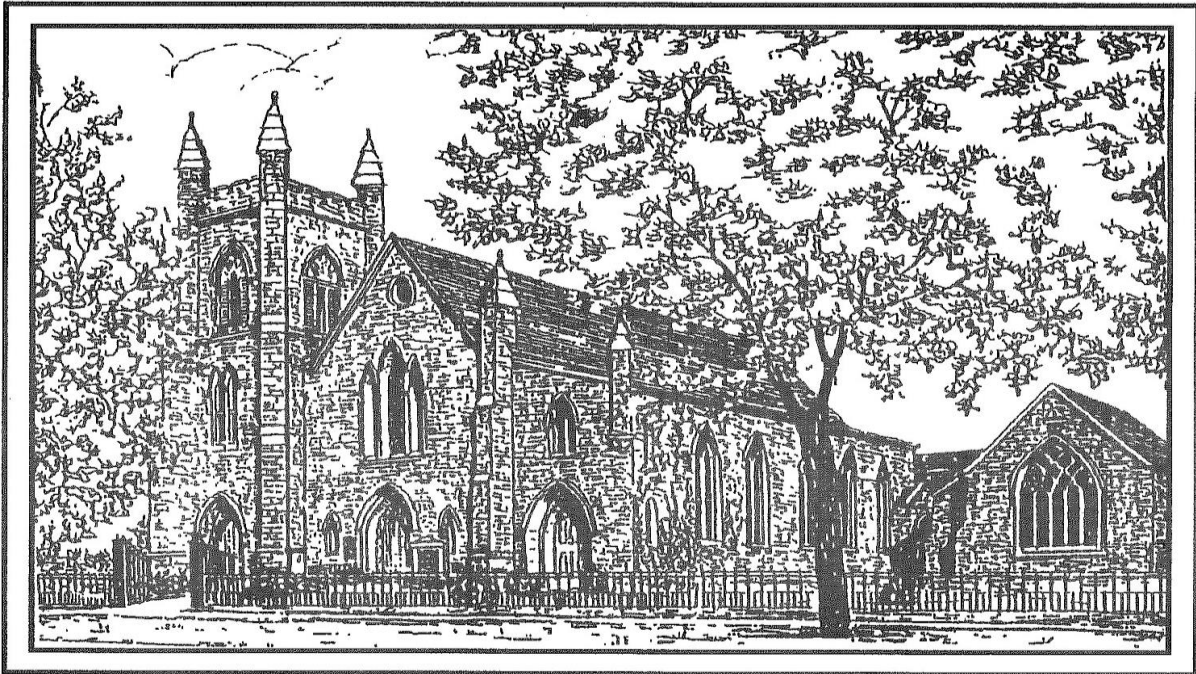


# First Congregational Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



Founded in 1680

*Living the Love and Justice of Jesus*

A Service of Lessons and Carols  
with Baptisms, Confirmations, and Holy Communion

JANUARY 5, 2025 ~ 10:00 am

## Gathering Music

## Welcome and Announcements

## Ring of the Bell

## Prelude

*“What Child Is This”*

Greensleeves

## Bringing Forth the Light of Christ

Acolytes

## \*Call to Worship

One: Praise God in the heavens! Praise God among us! Praise the Holy One!

**Many: Praise God who vindicates us! Praise God who sustains us!**

One: Praise God from the depths! Praise God in all circumstances!

**Many: Praise the Creator who made us! Praise God who shapes us!**

One: Let all praise the name of the Holy One!

**Many: The glory of God reigns in heaven and on earth! Praise the Holy One!**

## \*Carol

*“Joy to the World”*

NCH#132

## **\*Invocation**

**Redeeming God, you have met us in valleys, on storming seas, and on mountaintops. We welcome your presence now as we come to worship you. We gather in gratitude and assurance that you are our God, and we proclaim with gladness that we are your people. Some come in need of encouragement or comfort. Others need a healing touch. We hunger and thirst for righteousness as we praise and honor your name. Transform us to be living vessels of your love and living witnesses of your continuing presence in the world. Amen.**

## **Prayer for Transformation**

**God, you share with us words of hope and Good News. But sometimes we are unable to hear them because the source is too familiar, or because the people know us too well, or because we want the Good News to be just for us. In the multitude of ways we can and have subverted your message of freedom and healing, we have left the path of true wisdom. Now, we call upon your Grace to lead us back on track. Amen.**

## **Words of Assurance**

### **Baptism**

### **Introduction**

### **Questions to the Candidates**

Presider Natalia Xochitl and Katherine Anne, is it your desire to be welcomed formally into the faith and family of Jesus Christ?

**Candidates: That is our desire.**

Presider: Do you promise to go on giving honor to God by loving your neighbor day by day

**Candidates: That is our promise.**

Presider: Do you also promise, God being your helper, that you will build your life on the love and the teachings that Jesus has given us so that we may all continue to grow in grace?

**Candidates: We promise, God being our helper.**

Presider: Do you promise to go on expressing that love and truth with people of all faiths throughout the world?

**Candidates: We do.**

Presider: (To the congregation) Do you promise, with God's help, to provide a loving and caring Christian community, within which Katherine Anne and Natalia Xochitl can flourish in love and in faith?

**Congregation: We promise our love, support, and care. Amen.**

## **Blessing of the Water and Baptism of the Candidates**

### **Carol**

*"The First Noel"*

(v.1,2,3) NCH#139

### **First Lesson**

Luke 1:26-35, 38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by the angel's words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you;

therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God.” Then Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” Then the angel departed from her.

**Carol**

*“In the Bleak Midwinter”*

(I,2,3) NCH#128

**Second Lesson**

Luke 2:1-7

In those days, a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

**Prayer**

**Carol**

*“It Came upon the Midnight Clear”*

(v.1,3,4) NCH#131

**Third Lesson**

Luke 2:8-16

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger.

**Carol**

*“Angels We Have Heard From High”*

(v.1,2,4) NCH#125

**Fourth Lesson**

Mathew 2:1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

## Prayer

### Carol

*“Jesus, Jesus, Oh, What a Wonderful Child”*

NCH#136

### Fifth Lesson

John 1:1-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of all people, but of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.

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**

### Carol

*“Go Tell It on the Mountain”*

NCH#154

### Order of Confirmation

Ellie Elizabeth Donovan  
Katherine Anne Evans  
Natalia Xochitl Quezada-Grant  
Julia Rose Pisasale  
Kara Jean Pisasale  
Avery Hope Walsh

### Invitation to Confirmation

Presider: We invite the confirmands to come forward. Friends in Christ, we all are received into the church through the sacrament of baptism. Now these six young people have been led by the Holy Spirit to affirm their baptisms and to claim in our presence their covenantal relationship with Christ and the members of the church through the rite of confirmation. They are here for service to Jesus Christ, using the gifts which the Holy Spirit bestows.

Ellie, Katie, Xochitl, Julia, Kara, Avery, do you desire to reaffirm your baptism into the faith and family of Jesus Christ?

**Candidates: I do.**

Presider: Do you renounce the powers of evil and desire the freedom of new life in Christ?

**Candidates: I do.**

Presider: Do you affirm the example of Jesus Christ, God’s Son?

**Candidates: I do.**

Presider: Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ’s disciple, to follow in his ways, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best you are able?

**Candidates: I promise, with the help of God.**

Presider: Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow in the Christian faith and to be a faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, celebrating Christ's presence and furthering Christ's mission in all the world?

**Candidates: I promise, with the help of God.**

### **Affirmation of Faith**

Presider: Let us unite with the church in all times and places in confessing our faith in the triune God. We are not alone, we live in God's world.

**Congregation: We believe in God: who has created and is creating; who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new; who works in us and others by the Spirit. We trust in God. We are called to be the Church: to celebrate God's presence, to love and serve others, to seek justice and resist evil, to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope. In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

### **Prayers for the Candidates**

#### **Laying on of Hands**

#### **Welcome to the Newly Confirmed**

Presider: Let us, the members First Congregational Church, Bristol, express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry in Christ.

**Congregation: We promise you our continuing friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior.**

### **Sharing of Joys and Concerns**

#### **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**

*"The King Of Glory Comes"*

W. Jabusch

#### **\*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**

Generous God, we thank you for every good and perfect gift you have given to us and through us. Use our offerings on this day for the benefit of creation, the redemption of humanity, and your glory. Amen.

**Hymn**

*“Silent Night, Holy Night”*

(v.1,2,3) NCH#134

**Holy Communion**

**Invitation to Communion**

**Words of Institution**

**Sharing the Elements**

**Prayer of Thanksgiving**

Christ of the East, Christ of the South, Christ of the West, Christ of the North: We turn our hearts to you hoping and praying for peace and life to dispel the shadows of war and death. We turn our faces to you trusting and believing for love and grace to shine upon us and to radiate to all. We turn our lives to you even if we know only in part what we will one day know fully. And now may faith, hope, and love, love most of all, abide in us as we journey together through this year. Amen.

**\*Closing Hymn**

*“Hark the Hearld Angels Sing”*

NCH#160

**\*Benediction**

**\*Benediction Response**

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

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

**\*Postlude**

*“We Three Kings”*

Arr. B. Mayo

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

*~ Our Organist is Nikita Zabinski ~*

*~ Our lay liturgist today is Charlotte Burnham ~*

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

*Please join us for fellowship hour following Worship*



## **Prayer List for Sunday, January 5, 2025**

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

### **For concerns in the world:**

For those wounded or killed in the act of violence in New Orleans over New Year's

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

Carrigan, who has cancer

Joanne Bergeron

Terry and Pat

Anne, Sarah Albanese's cousin

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**

Angela Goetz, who died in October

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

### **Upcoming Birthdays:**

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 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> Informal Gathering to discuss the presentation of Rev. Nancy as our Settled Minister at the annual meeting (After Worship DeWolf Rm) 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)

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](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 from this service were written by or adapted from the following: Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Vindication: Service Prayers for the First Sunday after Christmas, Christmas 1B - December 31 - United Church of Christ (ucc.org); Rev. Gord, <http://worshipofferings.blogspot.ca/>, re:Worship: Epiphany; Rev. Susan A. Blain, Living-Psalm-97-Three-Christmas-Collects\_Blain-Christmas-Day, Living Psalm 97 - United Church of Christ (ucc.org), Rev. Anne Fraley, <https://revgalblogpals.org/>, re:Worship: Christmas (re-worship.blogspot.com); and Suzanne Fageol, “Invocation to the Christ of the Four Directions” <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/churches/weekly-worship>, re:Worship: Epiphany; Prayer of Affirmation from United Church of Canada, 1980.*





The Groundhog is coming. *This is an invitation to join the First Congregational Church 30th Annual Groundhog Day*  
 February 2, 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 2, 2025. 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 roo  
 January 26<sup>th</sup> After Worship in Dimond roo  
 February 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday at 9:00am in the sau  
 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 sau  
 February 9<sup>th</sup> 8:00am before Church  
 10:00am Worship  
 11:45am Veterans home.

## Bristol's Stone Church Coffeehouse Presents

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



**Saturday, January 25, 2025** First Congregational Church  
 Doors open at 6:45pm 300 High Street  
 Music starts at 7:30pm (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.



Discover the Excitement  
**BRISTOL'S STONE CHURCH COFFEEHOUSE**  
 Live Acoustic Music Since 2007



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