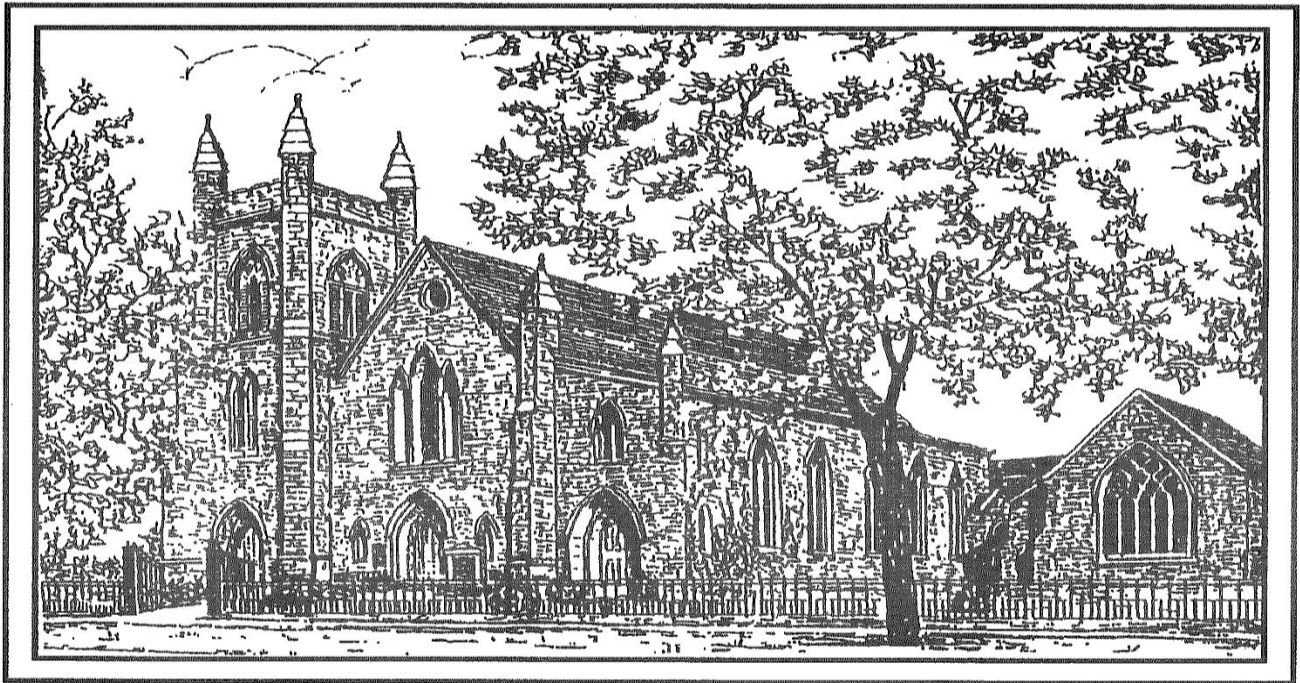


First Congregational Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



Founded in 1680

Living the Love and Justice of Jesus

SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

March 16, 2025 ~ 10:00 am

Gathering Music

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Introit

“This Is The Day”

L. Garrett

*Call to Worship and Invocation

One: We are a community of faith that has been created by the love of God.

Many: **We are the people who have been set free by the world of forgiveness in Jesus Christ, and are therefore a people called to reach out to the sojourners in our midst and in other lands, people whose lives cry out for the warm embrace of fellowship.**

One: We have come not to exalt our own goodness but to praise the holiness of God.

Many: **We have come not to boast of what we have done but to proclaim the redeeming work of Jesus Christ by extending the hand of community to refugees, displaced persons and asylum seekers.**

All: **With all our being, we will praise God and tell of God’s goodness in our acts of kindness and love toward the “least” among us in our times. Amen.**

*Hymn

“There Is a Name I Love to Hear”

NCH#52

The New Testament Reading

1 John 3:1-3

Amy Halt

See what love Abba God has lavished on us in letting us be called God's children, which in fact is what we are! The reason the world does not recognize us is that it never recognized God. My dear friends, now we are God's children, but it has not been revealed what we are to become in the future. We know that when it comes to light we will be like God, for we will see God as God really is. All who keep this hope keep themselves pure, just as Christ is pure.

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

John 8:31-32

Amy Halt

While [Jesus] spoke, many became believers. Jesus said to those who believed him, "If you live according to my teaching, you really are my disciples; then you'll know the truth and the truth will set you free." "We're descendants of Sarah and Abraham," they replied. "Never have we been the slaves of anyone.".... [Jesus said], "So if the heir—the Only Begotten—makes you free, you will be free indeed."

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"Jesus Calls Us, O'er the Tumult"*

NCH#172

Message

"A Story of Strength Beyond All Understanding"

The Rev. Nancy H. Soukup

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

**O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer: when I call answer me.
O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer; come and listen to me.**

**The Lord is my song, the Lord is my praise: all my hope comes from God.
The Lord is my song, the Lord is my praise: God, the wellspring of life.**

Offertory Invitation**The Offertory*****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 for Lent**

We may not be able to confront queens or challenge presidents; we may not have the capacity to divert resources or uplift communities; we may not have the voice to silence the noise of war or the words to negotiate peace between armies. But, as we follow you, O Christ, we are able to do something.

And so, we pray that you would inspire us to commit to and act on the small difference we can make: may we bring peace through small acts of gentleness and reconciliation; may we bring wealth through small contributions and collaborations; may we bring safety through small acts of consideration and acceptance; may we bring wholeness through small acts of care and service. And in the small ways, O God, may our small difference make an important contribution to your saving work in our world. Amen.

***Hymn**

“Beams of Heaven as I Go”

NCH#447

***Benediction**

***Benediction Response**

**Our God is an awesome God
He reigns from heaven above
With wisdom, power, and love
Our God is an awesome God**

Carrying the Light of Christ into the World

Postlude

“What Wondrous Love Is This”

Arr. J. Carter

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

~ ~ Our Organist is Nikita Zabinski ~

~ Our lay liturgist today is Amy Halt ~

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

Please join us for fellowship hour following Worship



Prayer List for Sunday, March 16, 2025

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

For concerns in the world:

The people of Haiti that a way can be found to stop the senseless violence so that its citizens can live in peace and find prosperity

All those whose employment is uncertain and for whom the way forward is unclear, especially here in Rhode Island

All victims of aggression and betrayal

For those in need of healing on our prayer list:

Claudia and her family, as she enters hospice
Brian Soukup, Rev. Nancy's nephew, who was recently hospitalized and is now home recovering
Kathy, Jen Johnson's cousin, who is recovering from brain surgery and has a long recovery ahead of her
Scott, Brenda, and Cameron, who need divine guidance and strength to follow God's path for them
Jeannine Marshall, Charlotte Burnham's cousin, whose has had a recurrence of cancer
Max, for healing and freedom, and for his Mom
Barbara Gwynn, Beverly Larson's sister, who recently had surgery
Kristen Conway, who is recovering from long-awaited knee surgery
Kristen
Robin Vestal, who has Stage 4 Duodenal Cancer, and her husband Ulysses, who are friends of the Grant family
Peter MacDonald, who has Lung Cancer
Rusty, who has Lung Cancer
Benevides Family, who lost their home to a fire here in Bristol
Autumn Quezada-Harrison
Ellie's Dad, who she misses
Carol, Karen's cousin, who had brain surgery
Carrigan and Tyler, who have cancer, and for Carrigan's nurse, Kristen, who is also being treated for breast cancer
Rosa Cermeno, who prays to welcome a healthy baby to their family
Joanne Bergeron
Terry and Pat
Anne, Sarah Albanese's cousin
Barbara Malony, Barbara Ringland's mother
Mark
Ken Latham in Leicester, MA, who is on chemotherapy for Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma
Fred Z. in CT
Those who have lost their way 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
Bruce C., who is in rehab, and Pat P., both friends of Ed Wiacek
Caregivers in our congregation

Upcoming Birthdays:

Justin Riccio	03/16	Jennifer Johnson	03/19	Steven Brosnihan	03/22
John Tyler	03/25				

What's on the Church Calendar

March 16, 2025	Sunday Worship: Second Sunday of Lent 10am Haiti Taskforce Presentation 11am (DeWolf Room) (rescheduled from February) Private Party 2pm (DeWolf Room)
March 18, 2025	Tuesday Church Council Meeting 7pm
March 19, 2025	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7pm (Dimond Room)
March 22, 2025	Saturday Bristol's Stone Church Coffee House 7:30pm
March 23, 2025	Sunday Worship: Third Sunday of Lent 10am
March 26, 2025	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7pm (Dimond Room)
March 28, 2025	Friday Special Speaker Ken Nomiya 7pm (DeWolf Room)
March 30, 2025	Sunday Worship: Fourth Sunday of Lent 10am ANNUAL MEETING, 11am (Sanctuary) (rescheduled from March 16)
Match 31, 2025	Monday Lenten Book Club 7pm (Guiteras House)

Please visit our website for more information about the Church
and its events: 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 10:00am – 2:00pm
Office e-mail address: office@FCCBristol.org

Rev. Nancy away March 17, to March 24

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 for this service are written by or adapted from the following: The Uprooted Ones: Remembering Refugees (Uniting Church in Australia), In Welcoming the Stranger, <http://www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Refugee-Sunday-Service-Planning-Materials.pdf>; re:Worship: Search results for refugees; Susan Miller, <http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/>, re:Worship: Search results for refugees; Prayer for Haiti | World Relief; John van de Laar, Sacredise.com, re:Worship: Search results for “We may not be able to confront queens”; Rev. Dr. Nancy Hamlin Soukup ©2025, Offertory Prayer and Benediction Prayer for Sunday, March 16, 2025, First Congregational Church, Bristol, RI.

Lent & Easter Services

First Congregational Church
300 High Street
401-253-7288
Bristol, RI 02809

Welcome to the First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ in Bristol. We are an open and affirming congregation and believe that God is still speaking. Wherever you are on life's journey you are welcome here!



March 16th Second Sunday of Lent

Worship 10am
SNEUCC Haiti Taskforce Presentation
11am (DeWolf Room)

March 23rd Third Sunday of Lent

Worship 10am
The Rev. Jametta Alston, Guest Minister

March 28th Friday

Special Guest Speaker Ken Nomiyama
7pm (DeWolf Room)

March 30th Fourth Sunday of Lent

Worship 10am
March 31st Lenten Book Club Monday
7pm (Guiteras House)

April 5th Fifth Sunday of Lent

Worship 10am
April 7th Lenten Book Club Monday
7pm (Guiteras House)

April 13th Intergenerational Palm Sunday

Worship 10:00am
April 14th Lenten Book Club Monday
7pm (Guiteras House)

April 17th Maundy Thursday

Worship 7pm
April 18th Good Friday
Labyrinth Walk Circle Noon to 3pm (DeWolf Room)

April 20, 2025 EASTER

Sunrise Worship at Colt State Park 6:30am
Intergenerational Easter Worship 10:00am

Officiating all worship will be The Rev. Dr. Nancy Hamlin Soukup

Easter is April 20, 2025

Time to order your
Easter flowers

All order MUST be in
by **APRIL 14th** PLEASE

**CORRECTED
ORDER BY DATE**

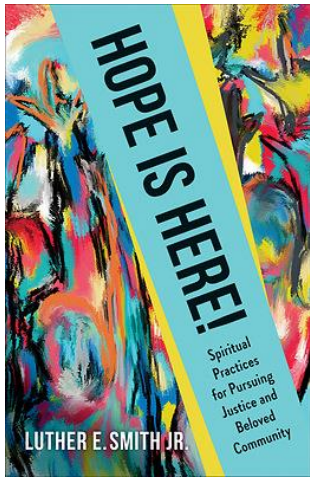
A Community Partners Program with Clements Marketplace



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.

Where do I drop off my receipts?: At the Frist Congregational Church in an envelope marked receipts will be pinned to one of the bulletin boards in the Wardwell Room near the church kitchen or in the Narthex, starting Sunday, October 27. Or you can drop them off to the office. We have already received back \$63.14 from Clements'.

Please save those Clements' receipts and join with us in their Community Partners Program to benefit First Congregational Church! Please.



Lenten Book Discussion Series, Mondays, March 31, April 7, April 14, at 7:00 p.m. (Guiteras House Dining Room)

During Lent, Rev. Nancy will lead a book discussion on *Hope Is Here: Spiritual Practices for Pursuing Justice and Beloved Community* by Rev. Dr. Luther E. Smith, Jr., This is

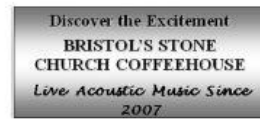
the book was the focus of her Advent sermons. March 10 will be the introduction. The next meeting will be March 30, giving all the time to read the book. Books will be made available for those in the discussion group. Please contact Rev. Nancy at nhsoukup@gmail.com if you are interested in taking part in the series. All are warmly welcomed.

Bristol's Stone Church Coffeehouse Presents *An Evening of Country and Bluegrass Music Featuring Amy Gallatin and Stillwaters*



Saturday, March 22, 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.



Two months after Pearl Harbor, a presidential executive order rounded up more than 120,000 Japanese-Americans and Japanese Nationals living in the United States and sent them to incarceration camps.

By learning about our history, we can ask effective questions about the past and understand better the choices we make for the future.



"It shouldn't have happened to us. And it certainly shouldn't happen to anyone else."

- Bob Fuchigami, Incarcerated at the Amache camp, Colorado



First Congregational Church in Bristol RI welcomes Ken Nomiya on March 28 at 7pm in the DeWolf Room 300 High Street.

Come hear him tell the story of the U.S. government incarcerating the Japanese in America during World War II. Ken was born in the Tule Lake CA incarceration camp and will talk about how this government action affected his life and the lives of the Japanese community long after the war.

Call (401) 253-7288 or email office@fccbristol.org if you have any questions. Seating is limited. Admission is free.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE PAST?


MAUNDY THURSDAY
Worship Service
 April 17, 2025
 Starting at 7pm



A service to prepare for Good Friday and Easter Sunday
All are welcome

First Congregational Church
 281 High Street
 Bristol, RI 02809
 401-253-7288

Good Friday April 18, 2025



Come and Walk the Labyrinth

Walking the labyrinth is an active prayer form of meditation that can give insight and guidance for life's challenges, help solve a problem, stir creativity, bring solace to those in sorrow, peace to the chaos of life, and provide an opportunity to recognize and give thanks for our blessings. Come join us on a labyrinth walk.

Hours are
Noon - 3:00pm