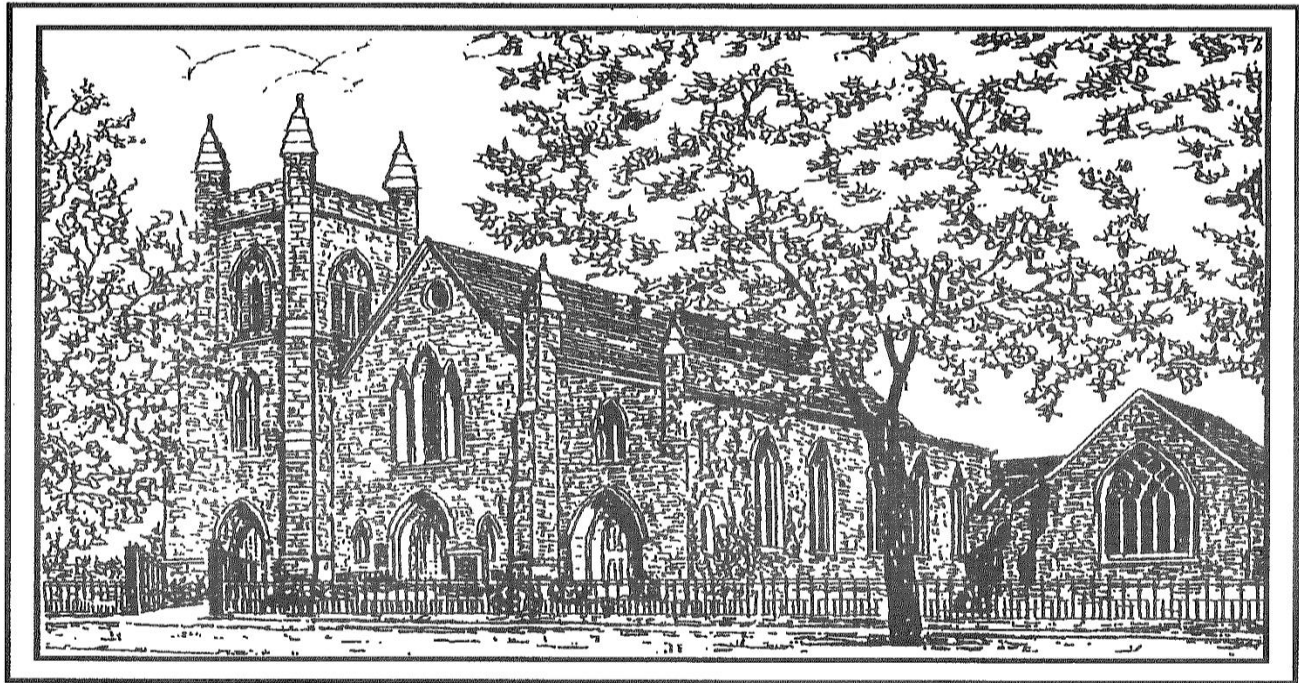


# First Congregational Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



Founded in 1680

*Living the Love and Justice of Jesus*

## THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

March 23 2025 ~ 10:00 am

### Gathering Music

### Welcome and Announcements

### Prelude

*“Prelude in g minor”*

J.S. Bach

### Introit

*“God Is Truly With Us”*

G. Tersteegen

### \*Call to Worship and Invocation

One: Only the hungry search for bread.

Only the thirsty look for water.

This is a place for those who are hungry and thirsty in spirit.

Many: **Only those who ache for meaning will pursue it.**

**Only those who yearn for a deeper life will seek it.**

**This is a place for those who ache and yearn for something more.**

One: So let us come here today with our hunger and thirst,  
our unsatisfied longings, our heart-felt yearnings,  
and let the God of life satisfy our souls.

Many: **Amen**

**\*Invocation**

**God of the wilderness,  
your Spirit leads us to face the truth,  
unprotected and exposed:  
in our times of trial  
help us to resist the worship of empty power,  
so that we may find our true food  
in Jesus Christ, the broken bread. Amen.**

**\*Hymn**

*“O God, My God”*

NCH #515

**The Old Testament Reading**

Psalm 63

**Comfort and Assurance in God’s Presence**

Steve Brosnihan

A Psalm of David, when he was in the Wilderness of Judah.  
O God, you are my God; I seek you; my soul thirsts for you;  
my flesh faints for you as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.  
So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory.  
Because your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise you.  
So I will bless you as long as I live; I will lift up my hands and call on your name.  
My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast, and my mouth praises you with joyful lips  
when I think of you on my bed and meditate on you in the watches of the night,  
for you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy.  
My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me. But those who seek to destroy my life  
shall go down into the depths of the earth; they shall be given over to the power of the sword;  
they shall be prey for jackals. But the king shall rejoice in God; all who swear by him shall exult,  
for the mouths of liars will be stopped.

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 13:1-9

Steve Brosnihan

**Unless You Turn to God**

About that time some people came up and told him about the Galileans Pilate had killed while they were at worship, mixing their blood with the blood of the sacrifices on the altar. Jesus responded, “Do you think those murdered Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans? Not at all. Unless you turn to God, you, too, will die. And those eighteen in Jerusalem the other day, the ones crushed and killed when the Tower of Siloam collapsed and fell on them, do you think they were worse citizens than all other Jerusalemites? Not at all. Unless you turn to God, you, too, will die.”

Then he told them a story: “A man had fig tree planted in his front yard. He came to it expecting to find figs, but there weren’t any. He said to his gardener, ‘What’s going on here? For three years now I’ve come to this tree expecting figs and not one fig have I found. Chop it down! Why waste good ground with it any longer?’”

“The gardener said, ‘Let’s give it another year. I’ll dig around it and fertilize, and maybe it will produce next year; if it doesn’t, then chop it down.’”

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!**

### **Children's Moment**

**\*Hymn** *"Sweet Hour of Prayer"* NCH #505  
**Message** "Am I Listening?" The Rev. Jametta Alston

### **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** *"O For A Heart to Praise My God"* R. Wetzler

**\*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**

**Loving God, bless these gifts and the givers that all might carry forward the ministry you intend here in our church and community, and wherever there is a need on the face of the earth. Amen.**

**\*Hymn** *"I Love My God, Who Heard My Cry"* NCH# 511

### **\*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** *"Lamb of God"* L. Larson

~ Leading Worship today is the Rev. Jametta Alston ~  
~ ~ Our Organist is Nikita Zabinski ~  
~ Our lay liturgist today is Steve Brosnihan ~  
~ Our greeters today are Janine Beausoleil, Eleanor Ingraham & Clifford Gustafson ~

*Please join us for fellowship hour following Worship*



### **Prayer List for Sunday, March 23, 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  
 Charlie  
 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				
Brittany Cordeiro	04/07	Avery Walsh	04/07	Jennifer Mowbray	04/09
Teddy Brosnihan	04/16	Doug Harrington	04/14	Alan Berry	04/16
Kathryn Anderson	04/18	Lindsey Harrington	04/20	Chuck Ramos	04/23
Bowen Drawbridge	04/25	Joanne Rotondo	04/26	Ellie Donovan	04/29
Leah Dieterich	04/30				

**What's on the Church Calendar**

<b>March 23, 2025</b>	<b>Sunday Worship: Third Sunday of Lent 10am</b>
March 26, 2025	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7pm (Dimond Room)
March 28, 2025	Friday Special Speaker Ken Nomiyama 7pm (DeWolf Room)
<b>March 30, 2025</b>	<b>Sunday Worship: Fourth Sunday of Lent 10am</b>
	<b>ANNUAL MEETING, 11am (Sanctuary)</b>
March 31, 2025	Monday Lenten Book Club 7pm (Guiteras House)
April 01, 2025	Tuesday Prayer Shawl Circle 6:30pm (Guiteras House)
April 02, 2025	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7pm (Dimond Room)
<b>April 06, 2025</b>	<b>Sunday Worship: Fifth Sunday of Lent 10am</b>
April 07, 2025	Monday Lenten Book Club 7pm (Guiteras House)
April 09, 2025	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7pm (Dimond Room)
April 10, 2025	Thursday Deacons Meeting 7pm
April 11, 2025	Friday Trivia Night 7pm
<b>April 13, 2025</b>	<b>Sunday Worship: Palm Sunday 10am</b>
April 14, 2025	Monday Lenten Book Club 7pm (Guiteras House)
April 15, 2025	Tuesday Church Council Meeting 7pm
April 16, 2025	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7pm (Dimond Room)
April 17, 2025	Thursday Maundy Thursday Service 7:00pm

April 18, 2025	Friday Labyrinth Walk Circle Noon to 3pm (DeWolf Room)
<b>April 20, 2025</b>	<b>Sunday Worship: Easter Sunrise Service 6:30am</b>
	<b>Sunday Worship: Easter Sunday Service 10am</b>
April 23, 2025	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7pm (Dimond Room)
April 24, 2025	Thursday CE Meeting 7pm
April 26, 2025	Saturday Bristol's Stone Church Coffee House 7:30pm
<b>April 27, 2025</b>	<b>Sunday Worship: Second Sunday of Easter 10am</b>
<b>April 30, 2025</b>	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7pm (Dimond Room)

Please visit our website for more information about the Church  
and its events: **[fccbristol.org](http://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](mailto: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](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:*

*~ from Prayers for an Inclusive Church 2009, alt. Posted in “Trial Use Collects and Prayers Over the Gifts for Year C” on the Anglican Church of Canada website. <http://www.anglican.ca/wp-content/uploads/Trial-Use-Collects-Lent-1C-through-Lent-5C.pdf>*

*~ written by Ann Siddall, in Lent to Easter liturgies: Year C. Posted on the website of the Stillpoint Spirituality Centre. <http://stillpoint.unitingchurchsa.org.au/>*

For the month of APRIL 2025

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.2givelocal.com](http://stopandshop.2givelocal.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

**Easter is April 20, 2025**

Time to order your  
Easter flowers

All order **MUST** be in  
by **APRIL 14<sup>th</sup>** PLEASE.



**CORRECTED  
ORDER BY DATE**

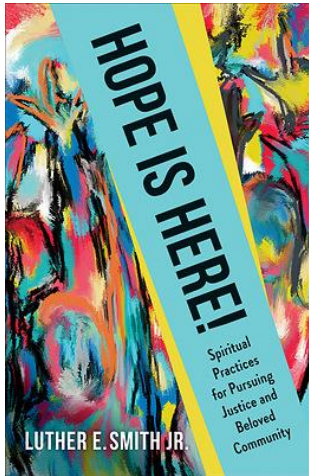
# A Community Partners Program with Clements Marketplace



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,

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

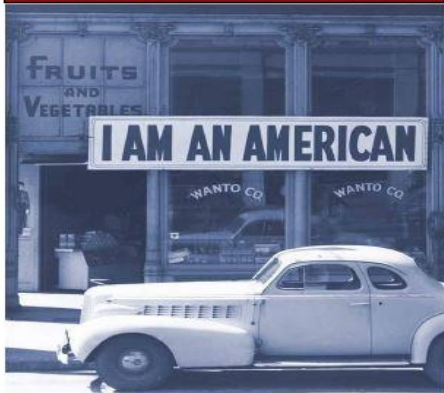


**Lenten Book Discussion Series,  
Mondays, March 31, April 7,  
April 14, at 7:00 p.m.  
(Guiteras House Dining Room)**

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](mailto:nhsoukup@gmail.com) if you are interested in taking part in the series. All

are warmly welcomed.

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.



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](mailto:office@fccbristol.org) if you have any questions. Seating is limited. Admission is free.

*"It shouldn't have happened to us.*

*And it certainly shouldn't happen to anyone else."*

*- Bob Fuchigami, Incarcerated at the Amache camp, Colorado*



**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

2-2025

For the month of APRIL 2025

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.2givelocal.com](http://stopandshop.2givelocal.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:

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Island 401/253-7288