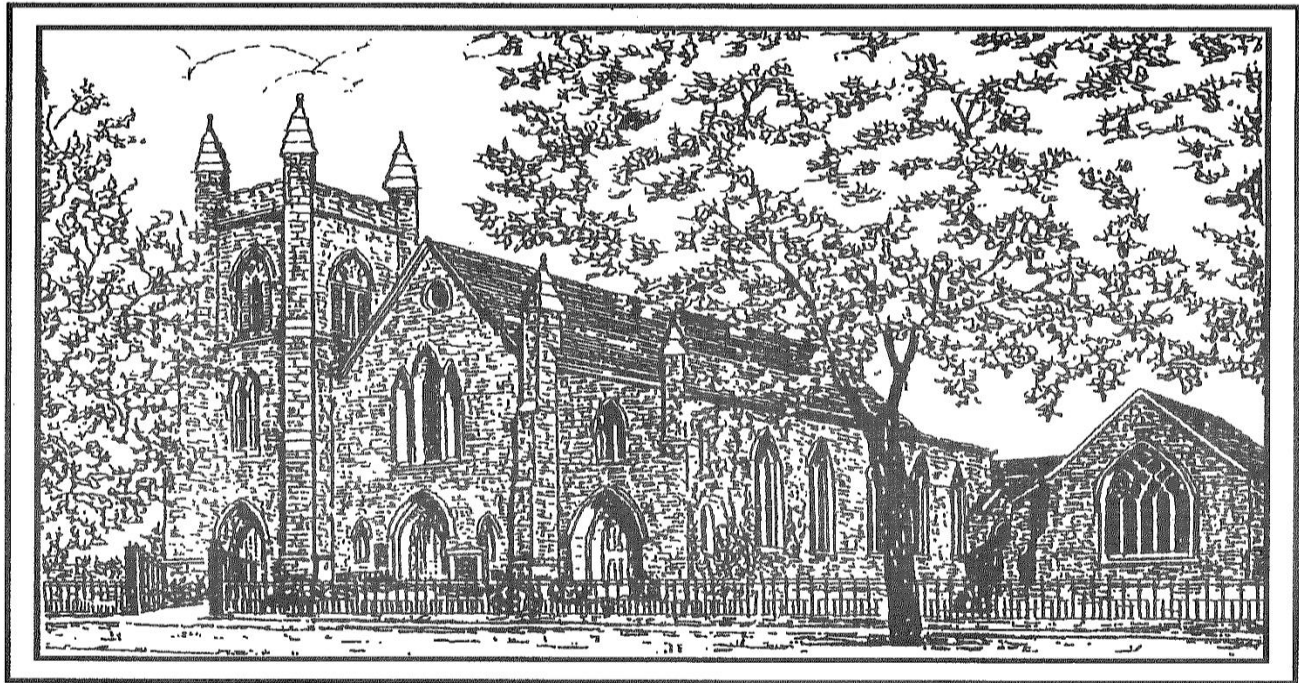


First Congregational Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ



Founded in 1680

Living the Love and Justice of Jesus

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT MOTHERING SUNDAY

March 30, 2025 ~ 10:00 am

Gathering Music

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

“Suite in C Minor”

Couperin

Introit

“God Is Truly With Us”

G. Tersteegen

***Call to Worship and Invocation**

One: Have you come far to be here today?

Many: You enlarge our gathering: welcome!

One: Have you come from around the corner?

Many: You anchor our gathering: welcome!

One: Do you seek sanctuary? Do you seek inspiration?

Many: May this worship greet you.

One: Do you come with purpose? Do you come with questions?

Many: We welcome you as you are!

All: Let us worship God together!

*Invocation

Let this be the welcoming place—a place of return. Let it be built by a love that bends toward those who return here. Because it is a love that has been waiting like a candle in the window, ever lighting the way back, and never willing to let go with the hope that each child will return home. Let it be the place where the only appropriate response to a love that has come home is to feast and celebrate, send up balloons, and prepare the party because our homecoming is now complete. Amen.

*Hymn

“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

NCH #43

Children’s Moment

The Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 66: 7-11

Susan Donovan

Before she was in labour she gave birth; before her pain came upon her she delivered a son. Who has heard of such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall a land be born in one day? Shall a nation be delivered in one moment? Yet as soon as Zion was in labor she delivered her children. “Shall I open the womb and not deliver?” says the Lord; “shall I, the one who delivers, shut the womb?” says your God. Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice with her in joy, all you who mourn over her—that you may nurse and be satisfied from her consoling breast; that you may drink deeply with delight from her glorious bosom.

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 6:1-14

Susan Donovan

After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. A large crowd kept following him because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming towards him, Jesus said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?” He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, “Six months’ wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.” One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to him, “There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?” Jesus said, “Make the people sit down.” Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, “Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost.” So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, “This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.”

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

“Beautiful Jesus”

NCH #44

Message "The Beautiful Homecoming Banquet" Rev. Dr. Nancy H. Soukup

Dedication of the South Windows Restoration Plaques Caroline Jacobus and Rev. Nancy 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 "Must Jesus Bare the Cross" J. Martin

***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**

God of abundant love, in you, nothing is lost. Gather our offerings, as Jesus gathered up the baskets of leftover food. Gather our efforts, as Jesus gathered the hopes of the people who looked for a true deliverer. Gather our service, as Jesus gathered people to God's heavenly banquet. Bless the offerings we have gathered, that nothing may be lost. Amen.

***Hymn** "My Life Flows on in Endless Song" NCH #476

***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 "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded" Arr. D. Wyrzten

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

~ ~ Our Organist is Nikita Zabinski ~

~ Our lay liturgist today is Susan Donovan ~

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

Please join us for fellowship hour following Worship



Prayer List for Sunday, March 30, 2025

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

For concerns in the world:

All those whose you are facing employment, housing, and/or food insecurity in our Bristol community or in Rhode Island

For those in need of healing on our prayer list:

For Roxanne, who is now dealing with breast cancer, and for Janice who recently passed away.

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:

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

March 30, 2025	Sunday Worship: Fourth Sunday in Lent 10am ANNUAL MEETING, 11am (Sanctuary)
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)
April 06, 2025	Sunday Worship: Fifth Sunday in Lent 10am
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
April 13, 2025	Sunday Worship: Palm Sunday 10am
April 14, 2025	Monday Lenten Book Club 7pm (Guiteras House) DEADLINE for Easter Flower Donations
April 15, 2025	Tuesday Church Council Meeting 7pm
April 16, 2025	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7pm (Dimond Room)
April 17, 2025	Maundy Thursday Service 7:00pm
April 18, 2025	Friday Labyrinth Walk Circle Noon to 3pm (DeWolf Room)
April 20, 2025	Sunday Worship: Easter Sunrise Service 6:30am (Location TBA) Sunday Worship: Easter Sunday Service 10am
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
April 27, 2025	Sunday Worship: Second Sunday of Easter 10am
April 30, 2025	Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7pm (Dimond Room)

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

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: Rev. Ruth Garwood, Squandered: Service Prayers for the Fourth Sunday in Lent, Worship Ways, Advent 4C - March 30 - United Church of Christ; Roddy Hamilton, Mucky Paws, <http://www.nkchurch.org.uk/index.php/mucky-paws>, re:Worship: Lent 4 C; Rev. Karla Miller, A Place for Prayer. <http://revgalprayerpals.blogspot.ca/>; The Abingdon Worship Annual 2009, © 2008 Abingdon Press, <http://www.ministrymatters.com/>, re:Worship: Offering Prayer: John 6; and Jann Aldredge-Clanton, www.jannaldredgeclanton.com, re:Worship: Benediction: Isaiah 66:13.



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.

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
Bloomin' 4 Good Program

Benefiting:

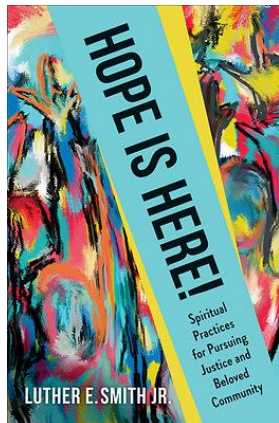


First Congregational Church in Bristol
281 High Street
Bristol, RI 02809
Office @ FCCBristol.org

At This Stop & Shop Location:



605 Metacom Ave.
Bristol, RI 02809



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 31, 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.

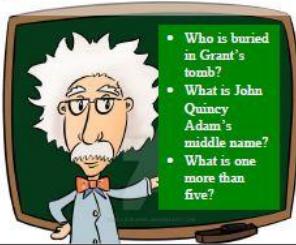
First Congregational Church

Team Trivia Night

Friday, April 11, 2025 @ 7PM

Ask Friends and Family and Come
Join the Fun

- Up to 8 per Team
- No Charge
- Bring Snacks and a Beverage
- Light Refreshments and Snacks will be available
- Prizes for the Top Finishers
- Call (401) 253-4813 to pre-register



Bristol's Stone Church Coffeehouse Presents

An Evening of Swing Era Vintage Favorites
Featuring

Vintage Vocal Quartet



Saturday, April 26, 2025

Doors open at 6:45pm

Music starts at 7:30pm

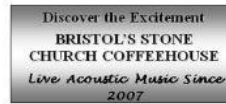
First Congregational Church

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.



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

3-2025