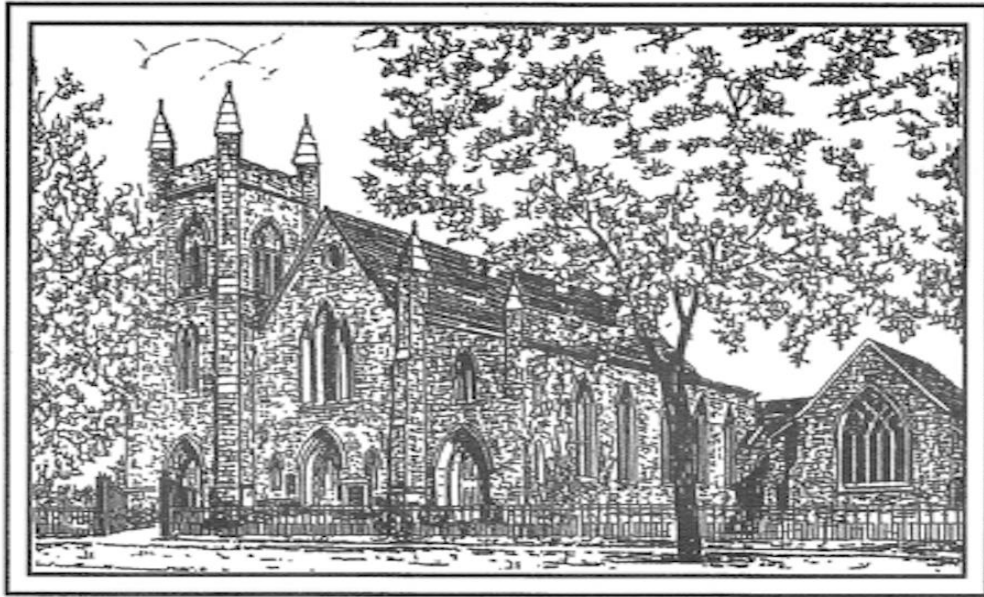


First Congregational Church

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

Founded in 1680



Living the Love and Justice of Jesus

HOLY COMMUNION THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

September 7, 2025 ~ 10:00 am

Gathering Music

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

Bringing Forth the Light of Christ

Acolytes

***Call to Worship**

Leader: God, you search me and know me. Before I sit, you know when I will rise.

Many: God, you search me and know me. Before I speak, you know what I will say.

Leader: God, you search me and know me, in my joy and despair, in my breathing in and breathing out.

Many: God, you search me and know me. Your knowledge is too deep to reach, too vast to comprehend.

ALL: God, you search me and know me. Search me, O God, and know my heart. Amen.

***Invocation**

We've come to worship God, who loved us before we were yet born, who knows us even better than we know ourselves, whose presence never leaves us, and whose love for us never ceases. This is our God. Let's worship together! Amen.

***A Prayer for Transformation**

Leader: Our sins are not to be hidden from God. Rather, we bring them into the light and lay them on the Table, trusting in the One who shaped us for goodness and will transform our brokenness into wholeness.

Many: Most merciful God, loosen us from the grip of the world, so we may feel your healing touch. Sever us from our sin, so your Spirit might bind us to you. Reshape us, redeem us, renew us, so we may take up our crosses and follow your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

^Assurance of Pardon

***Assurance of Grace**

***Hymn**

"Take Up Your Cross," the Savoir Said

NCH #204

The Old Testament Reading

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

O LORD, you have searched me and known me.

You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away.

You search out my path and my lying down, and you are acquainted with all my ways.

Even before a word is on my tongue, O LORD, you know it completely.

You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it.

For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works that I know very well.

My frame was not hidden from you when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed.

How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!

I try to count them—they are more than the sand; I come to the end—I am still with you.

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 14:25-33

Now large crowds were traveling with him, and he turned and said to them, "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple. Whoever does not carry the cross and follows me cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether you have enough to complete it? Otherwise, when the foundation has been laid, and yet you are not able to finish, all who see it will begin to ridicule you, saying, 'This one began to build and was not able to finish.' Or what ruler, going out to wage war against another ruler, will not sit down first and consider whether they are able with ten thousand to oppose the one who comes against them with twenty thousand? If they cannot, while the other is still far away, then they send a delegation and ask for the terms of peace. So, therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions.

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** *"Be Now My Vision"*

NCH #451

Message "The Upside-Down World of Discipleship"

Rev. Dr. Nancy Hamlin 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

Amen, Amen, Amen, Amen

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**

God of power and mercy, only with your help can we offer you our fitting service and praise. May we live the faith we profess and trust your promise of eternal life. We ask this through our Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

***Hymn** *"As We Gather at Your Table"*

NCH #332

Invitation to Communion

One: Jesus calls us to the well, inviting us to drink of the Living Water and to life eternal.

Many: **Jesus calls us out of the shadows, out of the graves, to be entirely known, and entirely filled with God's presence.**

One: Jesus calls us all: all who were made in God's own image, all who breathe the breath of God's spirit: the Spirit of Life.

Many: **Jesus calls us to the table, to the meal that nourishes our bodies and binds our dry bones into one Body, living in Christ.**

One: Jesus calls us, here and now. Come to this table, you who are beloved in Christ. Come, not because you must but because you may.

Words of Institution

Sharing the Elements

***Prayer of Thanksgiving**

O God, send your Spirit upon us and light our path, that we may travel the road you have prepared for us. Having heard your scriptures proclaimed and your word revealed, enable our hearts and minds to more fully understand your goodness and your grace. Help us break free from ideas that no longer bring life, so that we may embrace the life-giving work of your Spirit. Challenge us to forsake paths that ask little of us, and help us resist the evils and temptations of this world, that we may truly follow the way of your life. Amen.

***Closing Hymn**

"Joys Are Flowing like a River"

NCH #284

***Benediction**

***Benediction Response**

"Hallelujah"

NCH #236

Carrying the Light of Christ into the World

Postlude

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

~ Our Music Director and Organist is Nikita Zabinski ~

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



Prayer List for Sunday, September 7, 2025

For concerns in the world:

Members of our local community who are experiencing food insecurity as well as frustration about access to health care.

The Palestinian people who are suffering under a humanitarian crisis because needed aid has been prevented from reaching them on the border with Israel. The Israeli hostages who still languish in Gaza. The Palestinian and Israeli people that peace will one day prevail in the ancient land of our spiritual ancestors.

Peace in the Middle East and wisdom for the leaders of the world and all those who have lost their lives in recent conflicts.

Peace in the Ukraine

For those in need of healing on our prayer list:

Kathy Conoway, Sug Grant's niece, who has Stage 4 Breast Cancer, which had been in remission but has probably reoccurred

Kathy, Jen Johnson's cousin, who decided to return home against her doctor's recommendation; prayers for her safety and for Jen's Uncle Paul's safety as he tries to care for Kathy

Kristen, calling on all available angels to gather around Kristen as she undergoes extensive chemotherapy treatments with a minimum of pain and discomfort
Camille Pansa and Grace Steere, who are recovering from falls
Sarah, Celeste's niece, who is nine years old and is waiting for a liver transplant
Steve, Amanda, and Elliana Wiacek, Ed Wiacek's son and family, who will begin a three-year diplomatic tour at the U.S. Embassy in Manila, Philippines.
Nick Chaconne, for recovery
Christy, a friend of Lynne Ramos, who has been ill with considerable pain; for her medical team, and her wife Becky as they navigate Christy's latest illness
Ryan Higgins, Lilly Kilvert's son-in-law, who has Leukemia
A beloved son, who is suffering from Leukemia
Marty Costianes
Renee that she may find resolutions to issues pressing in on her
Family and friends who seek hope and healing in mind, body, and spirit
Prayers for all victims of violence
Roxanne, who is now dealing with breast cancer
Claudia and her family, as she enters hospice
Scott, Brenda, and Cameron, who need divine guidance and strength to follow God's path for them
Max, for healing and freedom, and for his Mom
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
Ellie's Dad, who she misses
Carol, Karen's cousin, who had brain surgery
Carrigan, who has cancer, and for Carrigan's nurse, Kristen, who is also being treated for breast cancer
Tyler, who is making a steady recovery from a bone transplant
Ken Latham in Leicester, MA, who is on chemotherapy for Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma
Those who have lost their way may have wisdom, courage, and strength
Harriet
Ryan
Mark E., who has an aggressive form of prostate cancer
Fred Davis, who has stomach cancer
Meriel Smith
Charlotte Griffith
Kellie and Juan Morales's daughter
Bruce C., who is in rehab, and Pat P., both friends of Ed Wiacek
Caregivers in our congregation

For those who have died:

Gail Delgado, Gina Damiano's wife, who died on Monday afternoon, and for Gina and their children Alexandra and Andrew who mourn Gail

Upcoming Birthdays:

Isabella Crouse 9/08

Caleb Walsh 09/10

Alexandra Delgado Damiano 09/18

Megan Fisher 09/23

Jacob Johnson 09/25

Katie Evans 09/09

Erin Donovan 09/11

Sandy Patterson 09/25

John Vaughan 09/29

Sug Grant 09/10

Douglas Fisher 09/13

Shannon Evans 09/21

What's on the Church Calendar

Sept. 07, 2024 Sunday Worship 10:00am

Sept. 09, 2024 Tuesday Facility meeting 7:00pm (DeWolf Room)

Sept. 10, 2024 Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)

Sept. 11, 2024 Thursday Deacons Meeting 7:00pm (Guiteras House)

Sept. 14, 2024 Sunday Worship Rally Day 10:00am

Sept. 16, 2024 Tuesday Church Council Meeting 7:00pm (Guiteras House)

Sept. 17, 2024 Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)

Sept. 21, 2024 Sunday Worship 10:00am

Sept. 24, 2024 Wednesday FCC Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm (Dimond Room)

Sept. 27, 2024 Saturday Bristol Stone Church Coffee House (DeWolf Room)

Sept. 28, 2024 Sunday Worship 10:00am

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/>.



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: Pentecost 2005, a liturgy from the Seekers Church community, http://www.seekerschurch.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=903:pentecost-2005&catid=5:liturgies&Itemid=80, re:Worship: Responsive Litany: Psalm 139; re:Worship: Proper 18 C; Thom Shuman, http://lectionarylitanies.blogspot.ca/2010_08_01_archive.html; Community of Christ website. <http://www.cofchrist.org/worship12-13/13-09-08.asp>, re:Worship: Pastoral Prayer: Proper 18 C; Catholic Forum website. <http://www.catholic-forum.com/saints/pray0483.htm>; re:Worship: Prayer to Follow Christ; Order of Carmelites, <http://ocarm.org/en/content/lectio/lectio-luke-1425-33>, re:Worship: Opening Prayer: Only with Your Help; Eliza Buchakjian-Tweedy, <http://sermonizing.wordpress.com/>, re:Worship: Search results for communion service; Ministry Matters, <http://www.ministrymatters.com/>, re:Worship: Proper 18 C; and re:Worship: Intergenerational Benediction: Proper 11A.

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

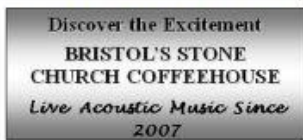
Bristol's Stone Church Coffeehouse Presents

An Evening of Americana, Roots Music Featuring
Neal and The Vipers



Saturday, September 27, 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.



East Bay Food Pantry

1d · 🌐

Good morning!! ☀️ We are in need of breakfast items! 🥣🥛
 Please consider donating cereal, breakfast bars and non-dairy milk (shelf stable only!) to help stock our food pantry. You can drop off donations during any of our open hours. Thank you! ✨

Pantry Items Needed



Cereal



Breakfast
bars



Non-dairy milk
(shelf stable)

Breakfast, please!

Drop off donations any time we're open!

Mon, Tue 10-4, Wed 10-6:30, Fri 10-3, Sat 10-4

BRISTOL'S STONE CHURCH COFFEEHOUSE 2025 –2026 Season

September 27, 2025	Neal and The Vipers	American Roots Music	www.NealandTheVipers.com
October 25, 2025	Porch Party Mamas	Urban Folk, Country, Blues	www.PorchPartyMamas.com
November 8, 2025	Studio Two	Beatles Tribute Band	StudioTwoTributeBand.com
December 2025	No Show		
January 24, 2026	Ellis Paul	Folk Music	www.EllisPaul.com
February 28, 2026	Kevin Doyle's Roscommon Soles	Irish Music and Dance	www.kevindoyledance.com
March 28, 2026	Dirty Cello	Blues, Americana, Rock	www.DirtyCello.com
April 25, 2026	The Clements Brothers	Roots, Bluegrass, Jazz	www.TheClementsBrothers.com
May 9, 2026	Tracy Grammer & Jim Henry	Contemporary Folk Music	www.TracyGrammer.com

Bristol's Stone Church Coffee House is located at the First Congregational Church (300 High Street in Bristol, RI).

Seating is limited. Early reservations are recommended.

Doors open at 6:45pm. All shows start at 7:30pm.

For ticket information, ticket purchase or to inquire about season tickets, please call 253-4813.

* Tickets are \$25 for adults; students are half price; children 5 and under are free.



96th Annual
First Congregational Church
300 High St Bristol RI

HARVEST MOON BAZAAR

NOV 22
10 AM TO 3 PM

**FREE PICTURES
WITH SANTA!**

**CHICKEN SALAD
CHILI &
HOT CIDER**

**BAKED GOODS
HANDMADE KNITS
CRAFTS
FLOWERS & VENDORS
SILENT AUCTION!!**

2025

First Congregational Church

Team Trivia Friday Night's

*October 10th, November 14th, Jan. 9th, Feb. 13th,
March 13, and April 10, 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 your team or send an email to dubordrjd@cox.net



- Who is buried in Grant's tomb?
- What is John Quincy Adams' middle name?
- What is one more than five?

At 300 High Street • Bristol, Rhode Island 02809
Church Office (401) 253-7288 • Office@FCCBristol.org